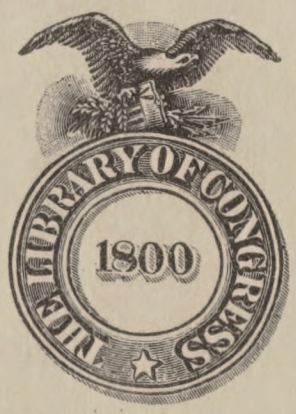


FOUNDATION STONES



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"A ROCK OF OFFENCE."

1 Pet. 2:8

"Behold, I lay in Zion
for a foundation a
stone, a tried stone, a
precious corner stone,
a sure foundation."

Isaiah 28 :16

SOME

FOUNDATION STONES

OF

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

By

EDWIN FAXON OSBORN, A. M., D. D.

Author of "Christian Growth", "The Teaching of the Parables," "The Vanishing of the Prince," etc.

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TO
ALL WHO WOULD BECOME
TRUE AND USEFUL
CHRISTIANS.

FOREWORD

The Great Commission requires three things: first, to teach; secondly, to baptize; thirdly, to teach. (Matt. 28:19-20). This book is sent forth to help in the teaching that should precede baptism.

Many laymen would be glad to assist in bringing the unconverted to Christ, but do not know how to teach them the way, nor where to find the texts suitable for such instruction. Perhaps this line of study may be helpful to others as it has been to the author and his helpers.

The book should be thoroughly mastered by every one seeking entrance into any church. But this alone will not be sufficient; the Holy Spirit must be sought and depended upon to bring the teaching home with saving power.

I do not feel that any excuse is needed regarding the teaching of this book. Indeed, I am not responsible for the Scripture that is quoted and

out of which the teaching of the book issues. It is due to the Scripture that its teaching be fairly presented and earnestly and fairly studied. If one chooses not to believe, then he must bear the responsibility of his unbelief; but we ought not to mangle the Scripture in an attempt to justify such unbelief, or to soothe conscience in its revolt against the unbelief.

So I have quoted and spoken freely concerning themes that are not popular, and concerning which we do not hear very frequently, of late, except in depreciation or even contempt. Nevertheless these themes are prominent in Scripture, even being basal in its structure.

I am well aware, however, that much of the teaching regarding some of these themes has not in the past been Scriptural. Men have wrought out systems of theology, elaborate and wonderful, truly; but their systems have sometimes overshadowed their legitimate sources of information. Christianity is professedly a revelation to man, not an emination from man, nor an evolution of human moral law. We ought to distinguish very carefully between Christianity as it stands revealed in the Scripture and the

religious philosophies which have been wrought out by men, even though the Scripture has been the chief element in the evolution of those philosophies.

I know that we are met here with the difficulty of finding the Scripture within the scriptures. The whole subject of the Scripture Canon arises here. The troublesome things concerning inspiration and authority confront us; and the thinking mind wonders whether or not these things are so. "These things." What things? I think that expression carries us through the shell into the kernel of Scripture, through the scriptures into the Scripture. And I firmly believe that the mind that is humble and willing has no more practical trouble in discerning the true Word of God within all that is bound up and called The Bible than the squirrel has in finding the kernel of the nut. If there be any doubt of this, add to the qualifications of mind above mentioned, humility and willingness, the personal acquaintance of the Holy Spirit, and all doubt vanishes.

This is not scientific? I grant it. But who made science the criterion? Have I not as rea-

sonable a ground for believing the conclusion of another, especially such another as Jesus Christ, as I have in believing a conclusion of my own! Who am I? Who is the scientist? Not God, surely. Jesus Christ claimed to be God, and if we can credit the historical statements of the New Testament he proved his claim. The difficulty of believing the Scripture does not lie in any unreasonableness there, but in the intellectual pride of some men, and the stubbornness of others. Let the man who believes be thankful that he does believe and not fall into senseless cant and religious bombast, so driving the thoughtful egotist away in disgust.

With regard to the authority of the New Testament writings study John 14:26.

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

This quickening of memory would be special for those who had heard Christ personally and to whom the promise was made particularly.

Others may have written the truth, but these uttered what they had heard Jesus say. These were a mouth-piece, Jesus being the speaker; others amplified their teaching. As to the authority of these amplifications—that is another matter.

Neither does the claim of special inspiration add anything to the authority of the man who amplifies. He may say with Paul:

"I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." I Cor. 7:25.

And his judgment ought to be good, but it is not necessarily divinely inspired. We know that many who have made great pretentions to special revelations have been very seriously mistaken, and that they have misled others, the number of such deluded people usually being in proportion to the insistence of the claim to special inspiration.

The Scripture within the scriptures, the Gospel within the Bible is Jesus Christ and his teaching. Here we avoid controversy and find life.

E. F. O.

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PART I

THE WAY OF SALVATION

FOUNDATION STONES

CHAPTER I

MAN, ALIVE

One does not call the doctor until he knows that he is sick; but as soon as he is sure that something is wrong with him then he wants to know what the matter is, and to get help.

Is there anything wrong with the hearts of men and women and children? Do we all do wrong, even when we wish to do right? Every honest person will answer, "Yes." Then something is wrong with our hearts, and we had better look into the matter. The Bible will help us. The wonderful story of Genesis tells about the creation of man, and his first fall into sin. Let us study it.

We will study first to see what was the condition of man before the fall.

He was sinless. To be sinless is to be alive, both in body and in soul. We are told, in Genesis 1:26-27, that

"God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."

And Ecclesiastes 7:29:

"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright."

It is evident that if God made man upright and in his own image, man must have been sinless in the beginning, for God is free from sin. If man is not holy now, then some calamity has befallen him.

Before the fall, man was in favor with God. This is evident from Genesis 1:28, where we read:

"And God blessed them."

If God blessed them, then they were in his favor. This is evident also from Genesis 2:7-25, where we are told how tenderly God cared for Adam, putting him into Eden, and giving

to him a suitable companion, and surrounding them with every sign of his favor.

Farthermore, man had power over all the earth. God said, in Genesis 1:26:

"Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

The same statement is repeated in the twenty-eighth verse; and in the following verses of the chapter he again repeats the same statements, and includes in the gift to man all the vegetable world. In the eighth Psalm, verses 6-8, David refers to this, and closes his psalm with these words of praise:

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Ps. 8:9.

And, before the fall, man was in great glory and honor. David speaks of this in the eighth Psalm, verses 4-5.

"Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."

But there was one thing that God reserved, and therefore man was made liable to disobedience. After God had done everything for man that could be desired, he reserved one thing. Genesis 2:17 tells the story.

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Whether this was really a fruit tree or whether the fruit tree is used as a figure of some moral act which man was forbidden to do, does not make the least difference; the command not to do something, whether it was some great thing or some little thing, became a test of man's obedience, and so of his love and loyalty to God.

To state, in a word, man's condition before the fall; he was sinless, in favor with God, had power over all the earth, was crowned with glory and honor, but was liable to temptation.

It is of first importance that we get a clear understanding of this original condition of man's soul.

It was a condition of innocent holiness. By innocent holiness I designate holiness without intent or effort; holiness, not the result of intel-

ligent choice, but the natural condition of the soul. This was necessarily so because, not knowing good and evil, man could not choose between them.

A person in this condition would evidently be lacking in all of those sterner moral qualities which may be likened to muscle. We can easily see that there might be a more vigorous holiness than this; but we must feel deeply that this innocent holiness is infinitely better than sin.

This condition of innocent holiness was that of pure and simple happiness in distinction from the sublimer joys of moral achievement. We have often debated the question, "Who is happier, the boy or the man?" with a decision usually in favor of the man. Yet, the decision has been rendered with a sigh at the darkening of the rising sun of life. Our judgment, as well as our faith, assures us that the ultimate holiness that is the result of struggle against a foe well known and well fought will be better than the simple holiness of those who are not even aware of a devil to tempt them. Why then do we sigh as we decide in favor of the greater happiness of the man? Because we clearly foresee the battle before the peace; noon before sunset; the

acclivity between us and the summit where the vision widens. The burden and the heat of the day precede the hour of homing and the evening song. The struggle of the soul for mastery must precede the triumphant thrill of holiness attained. The unjust trial; the mocking and the scourging of sin; the *via dolorosa* of painful struggle to bear the cross to the summit of Golgotha; the crucifixion of selfishness; these all lie between us and Paradise regained. But, by the grace of God, if we will rest at once and wholly in his Son, this long way is as short as faith may choose to make it. Holiness is within reach to-day. According to your faith all is.

CHAPTER II

MAN, DYING

In this chapter we shall study the fall. Man, falling from a state of innocent holiness into sin, is man dying spiritually, and sowing the seeds of death in his body.

Man, being holy by nature, would never have fallen into sin if he had not been tempted from without.

And temptation must have appealed to something good in man; for there was nothing bad in him, either to tempt him, or to which appeal could be made. Genesis 3: 1-5 tells how temptation came.

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

The Devil said this with a vicious sneer. It was really an appeal to Eve's self-love. Before

this she had not thought much about herself, and had not cared that she was forbidden to eat of one of the trees. She was pleased with the favor that permitted her to eat of all the others. But the Devil, with his sneer, made her think of herself; and as soon as she began to do that, and so to think less about God and his goodness to her, then she began to think that God had restricted her liberty. Thus, thinking too much about her own dignity and not enough about the love and the rights of God, self-love began to develop into selfishness.

The Devil appealed to another good trait in Eve; namely, her desire to be like God. He said:

"Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Gen. 3:4-5.

The desire to be as God, was certainly commendable. But Eve forgot that she ought not to wish to be the equal of God in authority. God, being the creator of all things, including man, has the right to control all things. Man can never hope to be like God in this, and he

ought not to desire it. God gave man great authority, the right to control all the earth; but he reserved to himself the right of supreme authority. Man may exercise all the authority that he can, so long as he does not act contrary to the authority of God. Man is like God in having authority; but he cannot be the equal of God. It was certainly God's right to reserve the knowledge of good and evil. Eve should have recognized his right, and not have aspired to become like him in that which God, in his wisdom and authority, had withheld from her. Yet the desire to be like God is a good trait, if the desire has sincere love of godliness as the motive.

Thus, through two lines of approach, Satan pushed Eve's good traits to the extreme that involved selfishness. Her self-love was unduly developed. The result was selfishness. Desire to be like God was carried to the extreme where the limits which God had set were in the way; and self rose up against God.

This prepared the way for the Devil's next stroke, before which we find man falling.

Satan openly reproached God, as is evident from Genesis 3:4-5.

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Thus the Devil spoke, and Eve listened. This listening to even the slightest reproach against God is the beginning of spiritual dying. It is the falling of the first thin veil between the soul and the face of God. As Eve continued to listen, fold after fold of this veiling fell, until her soul lost the vision of God.

Temptation is powerless to kill; but yielding is death. Eve yielded.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." Genesis 3:6.

This is the last sob of the dying. The folds of the veiling have fallen now in a thick mass that has hidden even the dim outline of God's face; and the soul is dead.

Thus died the race, by reproaching God and

yielding to temptation. This ought to be a warning to every one never to murmur against God. That is, it ought to warn every one who cares to regain what was lost in the coming of sin into human life. The very first step back to holiness is to recognize God as absolutely holy and just and good. Settle that. Do not let anything or any experience unsettle it. God may be depended upon. Depend upon him.

There are those who despair of ever regaining holiness. This would be a case for despair indeed, were it not for this fact of the love and goodness and holiness of God. But, as God is, he will never leave us to despair if we will grasp his hand stretched out to save us. Behold Jesus Christ, God's out-stretched hand! We shall come to this after a little while. But all through the dark chapters between this and the presentation of the Savior, let us feel the hope that Eve felt when God said to Satan:

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. 3:15.

Then there are those who scoff at sin and

holiness and God. But sin and holiness and God are facts, and they are within the easy knowledge of every one. Sin is well known to all men. It is in them. Holiness they may easily see in God. And God himself is

"Not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." Acts 17 : 27-28.

So while this chapter presents man dying, and the following chapters are sad with his death and decay, yet there is light at the other end of this dark and smoky tunnel.

CHAPTER III

MAN, DEAD

The revelations of the present chapter ought to awaken the most indifferent person to a sense of the calamity that befell man in the disobedience of our first parents, and to a consciousness of awful personal loss and degradation. The facts to be revealed by our farther study of these first chapters of Genesis are too evidently the facts of our daily experience and observation to allow a moment's doubt as to their terrible reality.

The first thing recorded in the history of the world, after the record of man's fall, is that he tempted another to do the wrong that he had done. Genesis 3:6.

"She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Eve acted toward Adam in this matter exactly as the Devil had acted toward her. The act of

tempting another is devilish. The Devil appears to us first of all in the character of a tempter. So far from becoming godlike by her revolt from God, Eve became devilish.

This disposition to tempt others is strong in the hearts of all unconverted people. They will often say that what Christians call wrong is not wrong, and so claim that they do not tempt those whom they influence away from God. In some things Christians may not be always correct in their judgment, but I am speaking now of general tendencies. Saloons, debaucheries, gambling places, and even the more refined allurements of society, declare that this trait of the Devil has entered into man, making him, in this respect, alive to the Devil and dead to God.

The next thing on record in the history of the race is that man knew evil. Genesis 3:7-8.

"And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves

from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden."

The Devil did not lie, wholly, in his statement to Eve. He said that she should know good and evil, and he spoke the truth in that. A glance at the world as we know it to-day assures us that we, too, know evil.

To know evil is a sign that we are not so far removed from it as we were before we knew it. We are farther from God and nearer the awful realm where evil reigns alone.

The next thing in history is the record of shame. Genesis 3:7.

"They knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons."

The sense of shame never would have been felt, if mankind had never come into contact with sin. Shame is the burning consciousness of sin in the nature, even though no degrading act has been done.

Shame declares that the knowledge of degrading acts is ours, that they are committed by the race of which we are members, and that we ourselves are liable to commit them. It is the

soul's involuntary confession that it is more or less under the power of the Devil, and has lost the holy life of God. This is to be spiritually dead.

Consequently we find man afraid of God and wishing to escape from him. Genesis 3: 8-10.

"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." I Corinthians 2: 14. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

This is true of life now, also. Before they become Christians, people do not seek God in prayer, except in times of extreme danger, when the fear of God and of his works overawes the soul.

In the ordinary affairs of life they even avoid all heart-searching books and sermons and experiences. The loneliness of the night, or the solemn silence of the wilderness are most burdensome. Thoughts of death are unwelcome. Men are afraid of God. This natural fear is the soul's involuntary confession that it is dead to God.

Next there appears the first case of blaming another for one's own sin. Genesis 3: 12-13.

"And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

It was true enough that each had been tempted by the person upon whom he laid the blame; but each one was free to resist the temptation; and each yielded for himself. This is another result of soul death. If there remains any doubt whether the race is dead, look into the nature of man, as it appears in life, from childhood until death, and you will find this sign of soul death everywhere.

Then follows the curse of God upon all cattle. Genesis 3:14.

"And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."

The serpent is cursed "above all cattle," which implies that all cattle were involved in the curse. Whatever there is of suffering for dumb creatures has probably come to them as a result of the coming of sin into the world.

Another evidence that the race is dead spiritually, is the war, without end, between man and the Devil. Genesis 3:15.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The death struggle has been going on from the time that God spoke these words to Eve until this hour. Not one soul has been free from it, not one has escaped the bruising of the heel. The fangs of Satan have left the poison

of sin in every soul of man; and though separated from God in this state of soul death, yet the race, as a race, has ever been striking back at the Devil, seeking to keep him in restraint sufficient to make certain that hell should not be let loose upon us and in us.

But in spite of our efforts the Devil has so far succeeded with man that millions have already suffered the death of body which releases the soul to Hell; and all the rest of the race, who have not been redeemed, are fighting a losing battle.

A farther sign of this dead condition of the race is seen in the sorrow and subjection of woman. Genesis 3:16.

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

And the portion of the man is sorrow and toil. Genesis 3:17-19.

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

Death of the body is also a result of death of the soul. Immortality in the human state was within reach of Adam and Eve. They would without doubt have eaten from the tree of life, in time, and so would never have died in body.

But after the fall they were forcibly prevented from eating of it. It does not make any difference whether this tree was literally a tree or whether it was some moral power of which they could have made use to keep the body deathless; in any case, man lost it when he fell; and so death of the body followed fast upon the death of the soul.

This may not have been, however, so much a punishment visited upon men, as a mercy shown them. To live forever in this state of sin and consequent suffering would be a sore calamity indeed. The young do not see this readily; but, as life advances, its unsatisfactory character is strongly impressed upon the soul.

The only reason why one would wish to live always is that he doubts or fears the future.

But even then the very aged, though fearing to die, often long to do so; and if life could continue forever, and should bring with it the infirmities of old age, suffering would become intolerable; until at last men would take their own lives, and risk the future. But, however that may be, death of the body is a result of death of the soul. Genesis 3: 22-24.

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

A farther result of the fall which has tainted the race, is that all are sinners. Psalms 14: 3.

"They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Ecclesiastes 8: 11: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men

is fully set in them to do evil." Isaiah 53:6: "All we like sheep have gone astray." 64:6: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." John 8:7-9: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. . . . . And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one." Romans 3:9: "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." v. 23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." 5:12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Galatians 3:22: "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin." "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offened in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

The meaning of this text is that one would not do any wrong, if the disposition to do wrong were not in the nature; and the disposition to do wrong is the source of all wrong-doing; therefore it is the sin which lies back of all sins.

In this condition of the soul man is estranged from God.

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you." Isaiah 59:2.

This estrangement is so serious that a new birth or spiritual re-creation is necessary to restore the relation that was lost in the fall.

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5.

It appears from I Corinthians 2:14, that man has lost his ability to understand the things of God; so great is his estrangement from him.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

It appears, moreover, from Galatians 5:17, that this estrangement leaves man actually in opposition to God, the Spirit.

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other."

Ephesians 4: 17-19 still farther emphasizes this condition of the soul's estrangement from God, by means of such words as, "understanding darkened," "alienated," "past feeling," all of which are intended to show the sinful condition of us all, by reason of the taint that is in the race into which we are born.

This condition is soul death.

"For to be carnally minded is death." Romans 8: 6.

Carnal-mindedness involves all that has gone before in this chapter. It includes not alone the tendencies to evil that seem to be a part of the physical body; but also, and more especially, those tendencies to evil which are natural to the fallen soul of man.

Consider for a moment the trend of life as you know it. Not among the very wicked or criminal classes only; but also among the highly respected and moral class, so-called. Notice it in children as well as in adults. And especially should one study the trend of his own nature.

It is generally conceeded that the very wicked are dead to the life that makes for righteousness; but how do these very wicked people come to this state of great wickedness? They come down by gradations from what are considered the higher moral levels. A boy, whether high-born or low-born, takes his first drink before he becomes a drunkard, hates before he becomes a murderer, covets before he steals. We see him well down the incline towards the bottomless pit at the foot of the slide. But he was once higher up, though always on that incline. He undoubtedly made, at some time in his history, an attempt to keep from sliding down.

The same is true of moral men, so-called. Every one of them has felt the tendency to slip, and feared the possibility of sliding down. And not only so, but every one has slidden, more or less, down his own incline, the incline peculiar to his own nature, an incline possibly not in sight, but descending to the same low levels, and ultimately to the pit.

Any one who has watched the growth of children with any degree of thoughtfulness, has observed the tendency to slide into naughtiness, bad temper, and early disobedience. How much

too readily they pick up bad words! Every time a parent corrects a child it is an attempt to keep him from sliding farther down, and is an acknowledgment of the child's sad tendency downward.

What soul has not at some time been alarmed at its awful tendency to slide down this great incline.

We should feel this danger as we sense physical danger. I once climbed a steep shingle roof. At one instant my foot slipped. Ah! What a thrill went through me. I flattened myself on the roof and sought to get the slivery shingles to adhere to my out-spread hands. I slid slowly, inevitably, to the very eaves, retarding my progress what I could. Help came and rescued me in time. I once slid backward, a hundred feet, down a sand bank, struggling frantically all the way down to clamber up.

Any one who stops to look at the moral world in which he lives and of which he is a part must recognize this truth, and be startled by it: The human soul, left unrestrained, naturally descends to lower moral levels. This is because of the taint of sin in the race. It is soul death.

It is exceedingly important that we should

not pass from the consideration of the great and awful teaching of God's Word regarding the fallen state of man without fully comprehending it, and deeply feeling its truth. For upon this keen understanding and feeling will depend one's action regarding the great truths of salvation to be presented in succeeding chapters. The preceding consideration ought to have a tendency to arouse one to a knowledge of his own terrible state by nature and to awaken in his soul the first signs of quickening from the dead.

CHAPTER IV

THE DOOM OF SINNERS

We shall proceed in this chapter to study the figurative teaching of the New Testament concerning the doom of the fallen race.

The word "Hell" is very commonly used in the Scripture to designate this doom, but not always; and the term is sometimes used literally, sometimes figuratively. We shall now consider the figurative uses of the word.

One of the Greek words translated "Hell" is "Gehenna." This is the Jew's word for "Hell." The Greeks had a different word, with a different conception. This word means, the valley of lamentation. It is a valley southeast of Jerusalem, where, in the days of heathen worship, little children were burned alive in the arms of the idol, Moloch. Thayer says, concerning this valley: "The Jews so abhorred the place after these horrible sacrifices had been abolished by king Josiah, II Kings 23:10, that they cast into it not only all manner of refuse,

but even the dead bodies of animals and of unburied criminals who had been executed. And since fires were always needed to consume the dead bodies, that the air might not become tainted by their putrefaction, it came to pass that the place was called 'Gehenna of fire,' " or, as it reads in our common version, "hell fire."

This horrible place was used by our Lord to describe the punishment of any person who should allow his anger against his brother, meaning any one, to pass into contempt, and then into cursing. Matthew 5:22:

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

The word "fool" used here is the same word that Jesus used in rebuking the scribes and Pharisees, when he said,

"Ye fools and blind." Matthew 23:17-19.

But he did not use the word in malice. That to which Christ refers in the Sermon on the

Mount is the spirit of malicious cursing. The Lord says that he who holds such a spirit is in danger of hell fire.

Toward the close of the Master's scathing rebuke of the scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy and self-righteousness he says:

"How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Matthew 23:33.

It is this burning valley of shame which he uses to illustrate what their punishment will be.

James says that the wicked tongue

"Is set on fire of hell." James 3:6.

That is, the source of the wicked tongue's power to inflict injury is a condition of the soul that may be likened to this vile valley.

The Lord declared that it would be better to lose a part of the body than that the whole body should be cast into this awful valley of fire.

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut

it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.'' Matt. 5:29-30; 18:9; Mark 9:43-47.

We are exhorted not to fear men, but to fear him who

''Is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'' Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4-5.

The Greeks had another word, of Greek derivation, corresponding to the Jewish word ''Gehenna,'' expressing the idea of punishment, but without reference to the valley near Jerusalem. This word is ''Tartarus.'' It is used by Peter in speaking of the punishment of the angels who fell.

''For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; . . . . . the Lord knoweth how . . . . . to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.'' II Peter 2:4-9.

This is a warning to all sinners; but here especially to persons who are lustful and rebellious. See the tenth verse.

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There is, then, a punishment of the unholy, so awful that our Lord likened it to burning in this terrible valley. It were better to pluck out an eye than to suffer there. It would be foolhardy not to be afraid of the sin that promises such a doom.

Another figurative way of expressing the doom of sinners is that they are banished into darkness.

This darkness is outside of Heaven. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are in Heaven, but those who have refused Christ are cast out.

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 8: 11-12.

Those who seek only, but do not strive—agonize—to enter Heaven will be cast out.

"Strive to enter in at the straight gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. . . . . There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall

see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Luke 13:24-28.

In two parables the Lord teaches that certain people will be cast out into this darkness. In the parable of The Wedding Garment, righteousness was lacking on the part of one, and he was cast out.

"And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 22:12-13.

The parable of The Ten Virgins gives us a vivid picture of a house glowing with the light of a wedding feast, and alive with wedding guests secure within the brilliant house.

"And the door was shut." Matt. 25:10.

It is dark and lonesome outside. The foolish virgins who did not watch are shut out. Our Lord teaches by this parable that some, who have been negligent and careless, will be shut

out of Heaven. It will be thick darkness outside. Into this thick darkness, away from the light, the soul that is doomed by sin must forever wander in terrible anguish.

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 25:30.

Read II Peter 2, and Jude.

This region of darkness is full of pain and anguish. It is the home of fallen angels.

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6.

It is full of uncleanness, also.

"Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." Jude 8. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 22:13.

This region of darkness is that in which the beast of Revelation has his seat. A horrible region of pain.

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." Rev. 16:10-11.

Speaking in this figurative way, Hell is full of fire.

The wicked are variously represented. They are represented by a tree. Matt. 3:10, 7:19, and Luke 3:9, agree that

"Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

In John 15:6, they are represented by a branch.

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

This branch was once a part of the tree, according to the representation. If one has been in Christ, but does not abide in him, this burning will be his doom.

In Matt. 3:12, and Luke 3:17, the wicked are represented as chaff.

"He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

This destiny is the doom of those who cannot abide when Christ winnows his threshing floor; this means, when Christ makes clear the distinction between false profession of religion and genuine devotion to the Lord. These words had special reference to the separating power of the Gospel that Jesus came to bring. It quickly and certainly discerns between the outward professor of religion and the real Christian. The outward professor will be burned in hell fire. This is a figurative way of stating his punishment.

The wicked are also like the tares which shall be burned.

"In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them." Matt. 13:30. "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of

this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." vs. 40-42.

See also Heb. 6: 4-8, where the end of those who have once been Christians and then fall away,

"Is to be burned."

But the wicked are also mentioned directly, and not only by means of some other words, as "chaff," "tares," etc.; and it is said of them that they are to suffer in fire.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. 10: 26-27.

They are to be cast into a lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are.

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before

him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.'' Rev. 19:20.

The Devil also is to be cast in there.

''And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.'' Rev. 20:10.

Death and the grave are to be there.

''And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.'' v. 14.

All whose names are not written in the Book of Life are to be there.

''And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.'' v. 15.

A list of evil-doers is specified in Rev. 21:8:

''But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers,

and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

The wicked are cast into a furnace of fire.

"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Matt 13:49-50.

The wicked are to be tormented in fire, eternally. All who worship the beast are specified.

"If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." Rev. 14:9-11. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into

the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.'' Rev. 20:10.

The wicked are also spoken of as scorched with fire.

''And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.'' Rev. 16:8-9.

The representations of the punishment of the wicked indicate not merely a natural result of wrong living, but an infliction of punishment by one in authority. There are other texts that make it still plainer that God deliberately punishes the wicked who will not repent. Such expressions as ''torment'' and ''beaten'' are used.

In this figurative language it is said that the wicked are tormented. Those who will not forgive their fellow men are to be tormented. Matt. 18:23-35 records a parable of our Lord

in which he represents a man who has been forgiven a debt as refusing to forgive a man who owes him. The last verse of the parable and the Lord's application are as follows:

"And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

The tormentors in the times of Christ were men appointed by the government to inflict punishment upon debtors and other offenders against the laws.

In Luke 16:19-31, we have the parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus, in which the rich man cries out from the depths of Hell, saying:

"Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." 24. "I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." vs. 27-28.

In Revelation 9:5, we read that a certain class of wicked people were tormented as with the sting of a scorpion.

"And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man."

Without attempting an explanation at all of the chapter in Revelation from which this quotation is made it is evident that not only in this passage but all through this book of marvelous and difficult figures, the wicked are represented as doomed to awful punishment, such as beggars description.

In Luke 12:45-48, the wicked are represented as beaten. This passage occurs in that exhortation of our Lord to his disciples to be watchful and ready for his coming. He urges them to be like faithful servants who wait for the return of their master. But he cautions them that if they play the part of the unfaithful servants who seek their own advantage and pleasure while the master is gone, they shall be punished with stripes, many or few, according to their knowledge of their lord's will.

"And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." vs. 47-48.

This figurative teaching concerning the future of the wicked makes use of the word "destruction" and related terms.

Destruction! It does not mean putting out of existence; but abandonment with reference to the purpose for which the thing was made. I destroy a letter, perhaps by tearing it, perhaps by burning it. It is destroyed as a letter; but the fragments or the ashes remain. So certain souls are fitted, by their refusal to perform the true purpose of human souls, for destruction. They still have a being, but a being distorted and perverted by sin.

"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Rom. 9:22.

So man is called the temple of God. If a man defile this temple, he has made it a false rep-

resentation of God. So God will destroy it, and thus show that it is no longer his temple, but the temple of his arch-enemy.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." I Cor. 3:17.

According to Peter's teaching in his Second Epistle 2:1 and 3, the wicked bring destruction upon themselves.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." v. 1. "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." v. 3.

Jude also speaks concerning certain people who are ready to find fault about things of which they do not know, but destroy themselves by giving full exercise to their brute natures.

"But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves." v. 10.

These are people who rail at and rehearse the faults of Christians, but go on in their own destruction.

In II Peter 3:7, the apostle declares that the destruction of the wicked is only waiting the judgment day.

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

Jude calls to mind the fact that those who believed not were destroyed.

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." v. 5.

The punishment of the wicked is a fall. Matt. 7:24, 27.

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." v. 27.

The punishment of the wicked is also ruin.

"But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation build an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great." Luke 6:49.

The wicked person who does nothing for God is like a tree cut down. The Lord speaks a parable. A fig tree did not bear fruit. He told the gardener that it only cumbered the ground; he might just as well cut it down. The gardener pleaded for the tree, that he might preserve it and care for it, and see if it could not be made useful, saying:

"And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." Luke 13:9.

The unfruitful servants who will not permit the Lord to reign over them will be slain.

"But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." Luke 19:27.

It is said of those who refuse Jesus:

"Every one that falleth on that stone shall be broken to pieces; but on whomsoever it shall

fall, it will scatter him as dust." Luke 20:18. R. V.

War will be made against the sinner.

"Repent therefore; or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth." Rev. 2:16. R. V.

A nameless visitation comes upon those who do not watch.

"If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." Rev. 3:3. R. V.

The wicked are represented as abandoned.

"I will spew thee out of my mouth." Rev. 3:16. R. V.

Another figurative expression for the punishment of the wicked is "death."

"And I will kill her children with death." Rev. 2:23.

CHAPTER V

THE DOOM OF SINNERS, CONTINUED

We have thus far confined our study to the figurative teaching of the New Testament concerning the doom of the wicked. We will now pass to consider the literal teaching. As we do so, let us remember that figures of speech are not intended to state more than the truth, but to awaken the mind, by means of things well known, to grasp things not so well known. The suffering of the wicked will be spiritual, but can be best represented to us by means of physical experiences. As fire burns the body—a spiritual suffering as keen as that will be the doom of the wicked. And so for the other figures used.

We now come to the literal teaching of the New Testament on this subject.

In studying the literal teaching we shall confine our attention first to texts that have reference to The Judgment.

A day of judgment is coming. This is taught

so clearly that there can not be any doubt of it. The Lord says that

"It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for"
a city that refuses the Gospel. Matt. 10:15.

The same lesson is taught in Matt. 11:20-24.

"Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."

Paul reasoned with Felix of

"Judgment to come." Acts 24:25.

And in Romans 2:16 he speaks of

"The day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ."

In chapter 14:10-12 he says:

"We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

James (5:9), speaking of Jesus, said:

"Behold, the judge standeth before the door."

Peter says that the people of the world

"Shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead." I Peter 4:5.

He refers farther to the judgment in the second chapter of his second letter, where he speaks of a certain class of sinners

"Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not." II Peter 2:3.

In the next verse he speaks of

"Angels that sinned" who are "to be reserved unto judgment." II Peter 2:4.

From the fact that angels who sin are reserved to judgment, that Sodom and Gomorrha were overthrown, Peter concludes that

"The Lord knoweth how to . . . reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." II Peter 2:9.

This judgment is spoken of as condemnation. Jesus says to the scribes and Phariseees who professed to be very religious, but who were inwardly full of sin:

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Matt. 23:33.

In John 5:29, he speaks of

"The resurrection of damnation."

The wicked are doomed to receive reward according to their works.

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall

reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27.

The Lord himself describes this day of judgment and the rewards in Matt. 25:31-46.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came

unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

In II Cor. 5:10, Paul says:

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the

things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

There are many other texts teaching the same thing.

This doom is also spoken of as "The wrath to come." John cried out to the wicked Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism:

"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come." Matt. 3:7.

In Eph. 5:6 Paul, speaking of many sins, says:

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

Likewise Col. 3:6:

"For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."

In I Thess. 1:10 he speaks of Jesus as he who

"Delivered us from the wrath to come."

See also 2:16; 5:19. In Revelation John speaks vividly of this day, in which the wicked are terrified, and cry to the mountains and rocks, saying:

"Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6:16-17.

Another form of expression which this teaching takes is that of exclusion from Heaven.

John in Revelation 22, describes Heaven as a place. The language is highly figurative. But from the fifteenth verse we learn certainly that sinners are excluded.

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whoseoever loveth and maketh a lie." Rev. 22:15.

The wicked are excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven includes the spiritual kingdom both here and everywhere, now and hereafter. It is the kingdom in which love supreme to God, and to one's neighbors as to one's self, is the law. The kingdom where all live in this love wherever they may be, whether on earth, under some world king, or in Heaven above.

"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:20. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." I Cor. 6:9-10.

In Ephesians 5:5 we have a somewhat similar text.

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

In Hebrews 3:17–4:1, we read of the heavenly rest that belongs to the children of God.

"But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see

that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

From all that Heaven is and from all the hopes that it inspires those who are not Christians are excluded.

Farthermore, the wicked are doomed to be denied before the Father. Jesus said:

"Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10:33.

Again, the wicked, even though they have professed to be Christians, are doomed to be excluded from the presence of Jesus. He himself said:

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew

you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.'' Matt. 7: 21-23.

Paul said:

''And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.'' II Thess. 1: 7-9.

A sinner must be a loathsome creature since even the Savior who was willing to die for him turns away. The sinner is a loathsome creature, and is doomed to be turned away from Heaven and from the Father and from Jesus, because he is a sinner and will not repent.

Of course if the wicked are shut out of Heaven they must be with those who are wicked, like themselves.

In the parable of the servant who was unfaithful Jesus said:

''The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an

hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 24:50-51.

In this text we see that the associates of the wicked are hypocrites.

In Luke 12:46 Jesus says that those who do not wait patiently until he comes shall have their part with the unbelievers. The simple fact that all who are not faithful Christians are to be turned out by themselves is to a thoughtful mind a terrible doom that will become more and more terrible forever.

This is so because these sinners are not sorry for sin. They live on in an unrepentant state, even in the midst of their punishment. This is clearly taught by John in Revelation 9:20-21.

"And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented

they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

This continued sin against all holy influences and in the face of all God's goodness is the sin against the Holy Spirit, which is never forgiven.

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Matt. 12: 31-32.

The punishment of the wicked is eternal.

The punishment of the sinner is as long continued as his sinning. After a certain time the sinner becomes fixed in his disposition and will never repent.

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still." Rev. 22: 11.

In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus our Lord represents the condition of men as already fixed in the future state, and possibly before leaving this life.

"Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." Luke 16:26.

And in the thirty-first verse he says concerning those who have refused to repent at the preaching of God's servants,

"And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:31.

The punishment of the wicked is therefore eternal.

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." Matt. 25:46.

There are many texts of like import.

This is a condition of unutterable woe, of loss unspeakable and of constantly deepening degradation.

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Heb. 10: 28-29.

It is because the Master knew all this and was moved by it even to tears, that he made his lament over Jerusalem, and over Jerusalem as typical of the world.

"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matt. 23: 37.

These sterner phases of the Gospel have always caused revolt on the part of some people. It seems to me that such revolt is entirely unreasonable and certainly very unwise. The teaching is very clear and decisive; and no one has any right to refuse to accept this part of the Gospel, and still to claim to be a believer in the Gospel. Moreover, these teachings are in

accordance with the only true philosophy of the subject. The soul of man can never escape from himself, any more than he can escape from God. As long as he continues unrepentant he will continue to suffer the consequences of his own depraved and rebellious nature.

Moreover, even if the final annihilation of the wicked could be proved, it would only contradict the teachings that we have been studying, and those who seek to prove that doctrine are found seeking to overthrow the Gospel on this subject. Jesus never even hints at such a thing as annihilation. That false doctrine has always grown out of a revolt against the teaching of Jesus regarding the doom of the wicked. Such revolt is almost sure to bring the very doom it seeks to disprove upon one's own head.

Neither do I find any teaching to the effect that there will be any opportunity for salvation after this life. But I do not doubt that if any soul should truly repent at any time in the future he would be forgiven and saved. Nevertheless, I think the trend of the Gospel on the subject goes to show that there will never be repentance after death.

After all, what is the meaning of all this dis-

cussion to prove another chance? It is simply the procrastination of a heart that is set on continuing as long as possible in sin; or else it is the unwise attempt of those who revolt at the thought of endless punishment to make it appear that the wicked will have another chance to be saved even though they crucify the Lord in their hearts and stubbornly refuse his mercy. The sympathy that would pardon an unrepentant rebel against the government of God is treason against God, it is moral anarchy. Some things no doubt are hard to understand; but the only safe and right way is to trust God. Instead of squandering this period of probation we would do better to make the most of it for our own salvation and the salvation of others.

CHAPTER VI

THE WRATH OF GOD

At the beginning of this chapter a word of explanation may be needed. We have dwelt, in the preceding chapter, upon the doom of sinners, and one of the subdivisions is, Wrath to Come. To follow that chapter on such an awful theme by another on a like theme may seem to be too great a tax upon the patience and faith of the reader. If this be so, pass this chapter for the present and go forward to that on the Love of God. But, on the other hand, he will be most greatly blessed by that chapter who can bear this and the following chapters first; for the love of God means little to him who is not fully awakened and excited by the fact that God's love is discriminate: and not only so, but that God's love is virile; being the enthusiastic approval and active response of his nature and being in favor of those principles and persons against the opposite of which his disapproval and antagonism

are equally enthusiastic and active. In other words, if God loves righteousness, he must of necessity hate unrighteousness. And our moral discernment of sin and of God's wrath against those who sin will be the measure of our discernment of his love.

I shall present first two texts from Revelation which show the terrible fear that the consciousness of God's wrath causes in the hearts of men; and the response of God's wrath to that of the nations that resist him in wrath.

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.'' Rev. 6:15-17, 11:15-18.

These quotations are from a highly figurative book; but, whatever interpretation may be given concerning the prophetic and temporal relations of the passage, it will still remain evident that John here refers to the wrath of God as a terrible reality.

Notice now by what this wrath is aroused.

The hardness of men's hearts arouses it. Upon a certain Sabbath Jesus went into a synagogue of the Jews and healed a man whose hand was withered. The Jews would rather see this man remain disabled than to have the

word of healing spoken on the Sabbath. Jesus was angry with them because of the hardness of their hearts.

"And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him." Mark 3:1-6.

God is also angry with those that tempt him.

"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation

in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)'' Heb. 3: 7-11.

The reference here is to the frequent murmurings and doubtings of the children of Israel during their wanderings in the wilderness. They doubted God, even to the extent of making a golden calf to be worshiped in his stead. Thus they tried his patience and challenged his authority and power. Thus they tempted him. So he sware in his wrath, ''They shall not enter into my rest,'' and he kept them wandering in the wilderness until that wicked generation left their bones bleaching there.

This anger is a punishment, not alone in itself, but also in the active expression of it on the part of God. Anger is in itself a punishment to one who loves the offended person, but to others the punishment of anger lies mainly in its threat of violence against them.

God's wrath is a punishment for sin. Paul

speaks of it as a punishment to come upon those who are impenitent, despising God's longsuffering, unmoved by his goodness.

"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God." Rom. 2: 3-11.

The last four verses of the text just quoted speak of the wrath of God as a punishment for the sin of disobedience to the truth. They

"Do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness." Rom. 2:8.

God is angry with them.

Refusal to believe in Jesus calls forth the wrath of God.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36.

The expression, "He that believeth not the Son," has in it the idea of refusal to be persuaded, suggesting that unbelief is mainly a refusal of the will. A man who is being persuaded to believe in Jesus, says: "I can't believe. My intellect refuses to accept him as God manifest in the flesh; and his miracles are past belief." If you succeed in answering his argument, he will usually show, if he does not say: "Well, then, I won't believe." And there lies the truth. Unbelief has its root in the refusal of the soul to humble itself before God.

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This stubbornness usually hides itself behind the plea, "I cannot understand." It is fortunate for even the strongest of human intellects that it is possible for them to believe God without understanding him. This being so God's wrath abides upon those who do not believe in Jesus.

This punishment of God's wrath is expressed also in a figure. As in Rev. 14:9-12, 16:19, where John speaks of the

"Wine of the wrath of God."

This expression is probably borrowed from the Hebrew prophets where God is represented as giving to the prophet a commission to

"Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them." Jer. 25:15-16. And Isa. 51:17. "Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out."

The idea seems to be that God visits his wrath

upon men, not necessarily by a direct blow, but by causing them to become intoxicated by their own selves and sins. As Paul says in Romans 1:28,

"God gave them over to a reprobate mind."

It is then he gives men the wine of his wrath. Their intoxication with self and their ruin is sure. The self-centered man is the man intoxicated with the wine of the wrath of God. This man may be intoxicated with his own animal or intellectual or spiritual nature. His ruin is sure. He is drunk with the wine of the wrath of God.

A somewhat similar figure with a more direct meaning is found in Rev. 14:18-20.

"And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trod-

den without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

And also 19:15,

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."–

In these references those who are the objects of God's wrath are represented as trampled upon by him as the grapes in the winepress are trampled upon by those whose business it is to tread out the wine.

The Wrath of God is finally to have an end when it has done all that it is intended to do. Rev. 15:1.

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God."

From Romans 12:19 we learn that wrath and the visitation of it upon the offender belongs to God.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

The wrath of man is not always righteous, and so the punishment which his wrath would inflict may not always be just. It is not so with God. His wrath is always righteous and so punishment may safely be left to him. Rulers are considered by Paul as agents of God in this matter. Rom. 13: 3-4.

It seems that even in Paul's day the righteousness of God's wrath was called in question. He answered decisively.

First, he declares that the fact that some do not believe God does not in any way make faith in God useless. It does not make God unfaithful because some do not believe in him. But the great majority of men, however unrighteous they may be, know that God is righteous. We do not even know unrighteousness except by comparison with the righteousness of God. So our very unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God and bears witness to it. If then, God is righteous, shall we say that his

wrath is unrighteous? Certainly not. Moreover, the fact that God's wrath is aroused by our unrighteousness is only added confirmation of the fact of his righteousness. And, still farther, God is responsible for the moral government of the universe. If he should not visit his wrath upon the sinner in punishment he would manifestly shirk his great responsibility, and so be himself unrighteous. A few days ago I heard a mother rebuke her little girl, about five years old, for doing some wrong. The child kept on. The mother rebuked her several times; and finally said, "Come here, come here to me this minute." The child shook her head and kicked her heels on the floor. The mother said, "Well then you behave yourself." But the child went on sinning. If it had been God dealing with that child he would have been angry and would have visited his wrath in punishment. God sometimes defers punishment for wise purposes of his own, no doubt; but all will be made right in the "day of wrath."

"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I

speak as a man) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?'' Rom. 3:5-6.

In the second place God's wrath is righteous because God is God.

''Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?'' Rom. 9:20-24.

We must notice next the objects of God's wrath.

Paul speaks of ungodliness and unrighteousness, in the abstract, as such objects of wrath.

''For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteous-

ness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them." Rom. 1:18-19.

But even in this mention of abstract evil as the object of God's wrath Paul involves moral beings, saying, "Who hold," etc., showing that it is impossible to have sin without a sinner. The statement so often heard that God loves the sinner but hates his sin is not true and is impossible. Sin does not fly around outside of souls, seeking entrance, like a raven around a rookery. Sin is the moral soul of man acting contrary to the known will of God. Sin is wrong moral action. Sin is not alive. It cannot be punished. It cannot be hated, in the sense of deserving punishment. It does not have moral responsibility. The thing that lives and is responsible is the soul acting contrary to God's will. When all sinners stop sinning there will be no sin. So God's wrath has the sinner for its object, not the sinner's sin. This does not in the least degree interfere with the love of God, as will be made clear when we come to the chapter on that subject. In Revelation 15:7-16:1, the earth is mentioned as the object of

God's wrath, meaning the sinful race living there.

"And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth."

In Romans 13: 3-4 are mentioned especially those who break the laws of the land, and rulers are mentioned as the agents of God for inflicting his wrath in punishment.

"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God,

a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

In Romans 2:8-11 the contentious and disobedient are specified.

"But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God."

In Revelation 14:9-10, the worshipers of the beast are mentioned as objects of God's wrath.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

The wrath of God is aroused against the "sons of disobedience." Eph. 5:5-6.

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

And Col. 3:5-6.

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."

In that far-famed third chapter of John, at the sixteenth verse Jesus says:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

He says also, at the thirty-sixth verse,

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son

shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

So God's wrath has the sinner himself as its object. Romans 2: 3-7.

"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."

Now, finally, how shall man be saved from wrath? This will be answered at length in subsequent chapters, but for the present let Paul speak again.

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth

his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.'' Rom. 5:7-9.

We are always in danger of forming our idea of God from what we know of men. This would make our idea of God as weak and sinful as the human race. We must not judge of God's wrath by what we know of the wrath of man. An angry man is not, once in a thousand times, a fit illustration of our God when angry. The wrath of God is holy, righteous, majestic, the revolt of his being against sinners; accompanied by a firm and calm determination to do his duty by them and so to preserve the universe from moral anarchy.

CHAPTER VII

MAN CANNOT SAVE HIMSELF

The instinct of self-preservation is present morally as well as physically in man. As soon as one's condition of moral danger is seen the soul instinctively seeks to rescue itself. Good resolutions are made. Bad habits are cut off. Some acts of charity are done. By these means a better moral life may be developed; but they do not save the soul. This is like seeking to make a crab-apple tree bear good fruit by cutting off the branches that bear crab-apples.

However, we will not reason about the matter now, but will go directly to the teaching of the Gospel regarding it.

Our Lord declared plainly that man cannot save himself, when he said:

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." John 6:44.

Paul gives the reason for this fact in I Cor. 2:14, where he says:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

By the "natural man" Paul means the man in his natural condition since the fall; or, more plainly, the person who is not a Christian.

This natural man, not being particularly interested in God, not caring especially for him or for his word, does not have any decided feeling about the subject of Christianity. He is really indifferent to it; and so, of course, he does not understand it.

There is no sympathy, on the part of the natural man, with the things of God. Where there is a lack of sympathy there cannot be any true understanding.

The soul that is indifferent to God and to his teaching, and that is not in active sympathy with God and with his teaching is in a condition called spiritual death. He has no spiritual sensation. He is like one in a faint, or under the influence of chloroform or liquor. He is alive in a sense, but is dead or insensible to real life. Yet he is alive to selfishness and

sin, and he thinks this is being really alive. So Paul says:

"I was alive without the law once." Rom. 7:9.

By this he means that he was alive to sin, but dead to God.

Now, just as very reasonable things may seem foolish to a drunken man, so, in like manner, because the natural man does not rightly sense the teaching of God, the things of God seem to him foolish. The things of God are not foolish; but the natural man is out of his senses. If a man faints, or loses his senses in any way, we work over him and use such remedies as we can secure to restore him. So should Christians seek to restore, by means of the teaching of God, all who are now insensible to God. But the restoring power must come from God. The restoring power is the teaching of God accompanied by his Spirit. The insensible, natural man, has not any power to restore himself; neither has any man power to restore him; but one man may bring the power of God to bear upon another man, and so be a help toward his

restoration. This restoration is called the new birth. And all who are finally restored are

"Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13.

Thus before the new birth is really accomplished; that is, before restoration is complete, there is a quickening from God. God's teaching comes from God, it comes from outside of the soul itself and touches it into some degree of sensibility. This is God, the Father, drawing the soul to Christ.

This new birth is necessary to any one's salvation. The words of Jesus are very emphatic upon this point.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:3-5.

This very earnest and positive statement on the part of the Master ought to startle every one who reads it or hears it. It is not the

utterance of an ordinary man. The statement of the necessity of the regeneration of the soul, called the new birth, is made with whatever authority Jesus had; and he claimed to have his authority from God. Certainly his earnest words to Nicodemus are worthy of our careful consideration. And surely he is not yet touched by the awakening finger of God who will not give great heed to a careful search that he may know what the Savior meant and how his words apply. That many men do not give heed to them is evidence that they are so wholly dead to God as not to hear him when he speaks.

The man is awakened; but cannot, even now, save himself.

The soul that was insensible of God, and was not sympathetic toward him, now realizes its lost condition and is troubled. So Paul goes on to say in Romans 7:9:

"But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

Paul is speaking from the standpoint of the natural man. This man would say: "I, the natural man, was dead, wholly insensible of God; but God awakened me by his commandments

and brought me to my senses. I was alive in sin, and thought that was life; but I now see that it was death. So now I find that I am not alive, but dead. The teaching of God has made that plain to me." This is where the drunkard is when he begins to come to himself. He says, "O what a wretched fool I am." He is awakened, but not restored.

Our Lord illustrated this condition by the parable of The Prodigal Son. Away from home and friends, and in a distant land, depraved, despised, hungry, a swineherd, he came to himself at last and determined to go home.

"And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." Luke 15:16-19.

Poor fool that he had been! He was awake at last, and made all haste, humble and repent-

ant, to his outraged father. There is hope for a man when he wakes up to the fact that he is dead to God; but that hope lies in the fact that he may return to God who will help him, not that he can do anything for himself.

And every awakened man begins to make a fight for his life. The man who has been insensible and is partly restored always begins to struggle; and his friends have to say to him: "Lie still, don't struggle. You have been sick, and now you can't help yourself. You must wait till the remedies can work." So it is with the awakened natural man, the sinner who has come to see that he is a sinner. He begins to try to do right, and cannot do it. Paul describes this struggle exactly in Romans 7: 14-15.

"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." vs. 18-

19. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" v. 24.

The attempt of the moral man who claims to be as good as his neighbor is doomed to end in failure. For however moral a man may be, he is not really alive until he has come into right relations with God. However much he may pride himself upon his living, he cannot live to please God until he has come into sympathy with God; and this can be done only by a complete surrender of self that destroys all thought of boasting.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace." Rom. 3:23-24. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded." v. 27.

So it appears that even after the natural man has been awakened, or convicted of sin, by the truth of God's word, he cannot save himself. Paul found this out. And every one who is now a Christian found it out in his own experience.

"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:16.

Man cannot save himself.

And even the Christian, after he has been born again by the power of God, cannot keep himself, without the aid of God.

All that he can do is to keep himself within reach of the power of God, and open to it; so that God may be in him to keep him.

"Keep yourselves in the love of God." Jude 21. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:12-13.

Work out the salvation of yourselves, truly; but when you come to do that, do it with fear and trembling. That is, while we have something, even much, to do with working out our own salvation, we are to keep constantly in mind the fact that we, unaided, shall not be able to do so. In all our personal efforts, whenever we are inclined to look upon them with any degree of pride and satisfaction, we should realize our danger, and fear, and tremble. Yet we should never be hopeless or even discouraged. We should never for a moment cease our efforts. So long as we fear for the result

of our unaided efforts and look to God for help we shall not work in vain, and need not work in fear or trembling; for it is God who works in us to will and to do his good pleasure. So we may work with confidence when we work in cooperation with God who works in us; but with fear and trembling when we for a moment forget him. Man cannot save himself. But God will save the man who will work with him to that end.

Our Lord made this plain by his beautiful illustration of the vine and the branches. John 15:1-7.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." v. 4.

Thus it appears that, from beginning to end, man must depend for his salvation upon God. One cannot even begin the Christian life at any time. He is dead, insensible, and he cannot begin even to long for God or to desire a different life until God touches him. This being so the time of God's first quickening touch is a time of awful importance. One may then come

to God. But if one then refuses, he sinks back into insensibility, and there is no farther hope until God touches the soul again. Then the struggle avails nothing; nothing avails but surrender to God. Thus the Christian's life is safe and fruitful only as he abides in Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LOVE OF GOD

The word that is almost universally used in speaking of the love of God means, not the love of sense and emotion, but love founded in a kindly disposition. So, when God is said to love the world, this word is used; as in John 3:16. God felt so kindly disposed toward the world that he gave his only begotten Son.

But when the love of God toward his regenerate children is mentioned, the word is used that stands for feeling. In all the texts quoted in this chapter the word is the one for kindly disposition, not the word for personal feeling.

God is the source of love.

Indeed, in his very being and nature

"God is love." I John 4:8-16.

That is, his nature is benevolent. He desires the good of all his creatures.

God is the fountain from which all love flows.

"Love is of God." I John 4:7.

This love is great.

It is as great as God, whose majesty is seen in the heavens, and in the insects that crowd a drop of water. His love, like himself, pervades all. It reaches out in every direction to every creature that he has made. He may not have any pleasure in some of these creatures that he loves, but he loves them with this benevolent longing for their good.

The greatness of this love is evident from the fact that God reaches out after man, before the man cares for him. 1 John 4:10:

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "We love him, because he first loved us." v. 19.

It is easy to return love; but it is a great love that reaches out toward an indifferent person, and especially toward an enemy. Such is the love of God.

Indeed, this love of God, the Father, is stronger than his dread of death for his only Son; so that

"He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but

have everlasting life." John 3:16. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8.

He gave his Son to death, and by this great sacrifice commended his love to the consideration and regard of men.

This love is stronger than death on the part of Jesus, the Son of God.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13.

Such love is beyond our comprehension.

"The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Eph. 3:19.

We can understand the love of a mother for her child, a love that will lead her to risk her life in its behalf, because she loves it for its own sake. But this love of God for man is a love for a creature that does not love him and that is continually in a state of rebellion against him. This is a love great in its unselfish goodness, passing our comprehension.

This love is great in its power to control the person who has responded to it. Paul declares that

"The love of Christ constraineth us." II Cor. 5:14.

We are held back from many acts by it. We are urged, because of it, to do many things that we would not otherwise do. It has power to turn the whole current of a man's life.

This love is manifested from God, and it appears in man.

Its manifestation from God is by the sending forth of Jesus.

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." 1 John 4:9. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." v. 10. "We love him, because he first loved us." v. 19.

In Jesus the idea of God's love first came home to the hearts of men. The Jews had known something about it before; but never as it was

made known in Jesus; and in Jesus it came for the first time to the knowledge of the whole world.

This love is manifested in men. It is manifested in a negative way even in the men who reject it. This they do when they reject Christ. In the fifth chapter of John, the Lord is reasoning with the Jews who are refusing to receive him. He declares:

"Ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." John 5:38.

This rejection proves that they are without the love of God.

"But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." v. 42.

So of course these Jews did not know God.

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." I John 4:8.

But the love of God is manifested in a positive way in those who receive it. In the very first response to God's love the soul is born again.

"Every one that loveth is born of God." I John 4:7.

We must remember that this is the word for the love that is not of the sense, the mere animal love of a mother for her offspring or of a husband for his wife. This is the larger, broader love that takes in all men and women, wherever they are and of whatever condition or color or degree of goodness or badness. This love of God, in getting into our hearts, has accomplished our new birth, and given us the knowledge of God. This love of God cannot be aptly illustrated by anything but itself. It is independent of time or place or space. It outpours from God himself always, in every place, and throughout all space. When the heart of man responds, then it is filled with the same love, and lives in the same love. The controlling power of the Christian's life is like that which controls the life of God.

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." I John 4:13. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." v. 16.

The result of all is manifested in the love for each other which all who are living in this new spirit show.

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." I John 4:20.

Here is the accomplishment of the purpose of God in his love for men. It is intended to bring men into the large life of God, in which all that is small and unworthy of him will be left behind.

The first purpose of God in his love is, ever, to secure the response of man, so that the soul of man enters the new world, the new life of God's love, the sphere of God's life. I John 4:19:

"We love him, because he first loved us,"

and thus we are led to fulfil God's purpose.

So we come into this great world of love into which no one can come who does not love. Therefore all who are in this world love each other. Those who live in this world have not seen God face to face; but they know him none the less, for the love that each bears the other is the sufficient proof that we are in God and he in us.

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." I John 4:12.

Here, in this reciprocal love, is God's love brought to the realization of its purpose.

But there is still a farther end in view in God's love. It is the casting out of all fear. He who loves thus has already triumphed over the judgment, and has no fear of it.

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment." I John 4:17.

And if the fear of the judgment is past, all other fear is past. The fear of death lies in the fear of the judgment, and nearly all fear has its root in the fear of death or of sin in its working. In this world of perfected love there is no fear.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment." I John 4:18.

Let us consider for a moment now the relation of God's love and of his wrath.

In the first place they are not incompatible. Do not forget that God's love is not a passion, but a principle. God does not "fall in love." God's love is that essential element in his nature that cares. It recognizes the obligation which his power gives to do the best possible for all moral beings. There is another word translated love in our authorized version of the New Testament which means that response of soul to soul which comes from congeniality of nature. This word is not used to express God's attitude toward those who have not been born anew. The other word is always used for the unregenerate. God *cares* for them; he does not love them for what they are. He is angry with them, but he will not abandon them while there is hope. Thus he loves them. Thus he loves the world.

Neither is God's wrath a passion, but a principle. It is the recoil of his holy nature from a moral creature into whose being even a thought of sin can come; but that recoil is not to abandon but to punish the sinning soul.

The expression "God hates" is probably not found in the New Testament. But it is possible, in this great moral sense, for God both to love

and to hate the same being at the same time. Then certainly God may be angry with the creature whom he loves, for anger does not necessarily involve hate.

In the second place, God's love and wrath are complemental. Sinning calls for wrath, whoever sins. One cannot be pleased with righteousness without being angry at unrighteousness. Love and wrath are complemental moral qualities, the two halves of a perfect whole. "Love is blind" is not true of divine love; certainly not of God's love. Divine love cares for the object of its love so much that it will not let the imperfection pass unnoticed, but calls upon divine wrath to correct it by punishment.

Finally, divine love makes provision for the final relief and safety of those who respond to it, by calling upon divine wrath to punish those who will not respond to it, and to make everlasting examples of them for the warning of those who are undecided whether to respond or not.

CHAPTER IX

SAVED BY FAITH

Another expression for "saved by faith" is "converted," or "born again." All of these expressions mean simply that the person who is "saved," "converted," or "born again," has become a Christian. In this chapter we shall consider what it is to be a Christian and how one may become a Christian. Then we shall give some examples of conversions which are recorded in the New Testament.

What is a Christian?

A Christian is a disciple or learner of Jesus. Christians were called disciples, at first. Later they were called Christians, and they were first so called at Antioch.

"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Acts 11:26.

What, then, is a disciple? A disciple is a pupil or learner. A Christian is a learner of Jesus.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." Matt. 11:29. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31-32.

In this text the Savior impresses upon his pupils the necessity of continuing to know and obey his teaching if they would be his true disciples.

To be a Christian is also to be a follower of Jesus.

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him." Matt. 4:19-20. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matt. 16:24.

In the days when Jesus was upon earth, it was customary for pupils to follow their teacher about the country. He went from place to place and taught while his pupils followed him and sat around his feet on the ground and listened.

In these days to follow Jesus is to learn what he teaches in the Bible, and to obey.

And to be a Christian is also to be a confessor of Jesus.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10: 32-33.

Christians are sometimes called professors of religion. Really, Christians do not primarily profess anything. They confess Jesus to be their Savior from sin. This public confession must always be made.

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Rom. 10: 9-11.

When the woman who touched the hem of the Master's garment was healed, he required her

to confess it before the crowd of people who thronged him.

"And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked around about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth." Mark 5:30-33.

In a word, a Christian is a learner of Jesus, that is, a student of the New Testament, who follows the teaching that he finds there, and publicly confesses his belief in Jesus and his intention of obeying him.

How may one become a Christian?

By faith in Jesus.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth

not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." v. 36.

This believing on Jesus is faith. But this belief means something more than to be certain that Jesus once lived and taught on the earth.

One must also believe that Jesus will keep his promises, and that he will keep them at once, and in his case. So that when Jesus says,

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," John 6:37,

one must believe it. If he has come in sincerity asking for pardon and a new heart his request is granted at once.

True belief in Jesus, true faith, makes obedience to the teachings of Jesus necessary.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7:21. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John 15:14.

One becomes a Christian, then, by believing in Jesus in such a way that he seeks to find out

what the New Testament teaches, and has the spirit to obey it, and takes Jesus at his word when he says he will not cast him out. This is man's part. God makes it possible for one to do this, and changes the heart; but that is God's part, and he will attend to it. All man need do is to believe, and then to believe that God has done his part. Men are saved by faith.

Let us examine a few cases of New Testament conversion.

John 4:4-42 gives the conversion of the woman of Samaria, and many others. First the woman heard Jesus, and testified to others that he had told her all things that ever she did, suggesting that he might be the Christ. In her own heart she seems to have believed on him. Then the others went and heard him and believed on him.

"And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word; and

said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." vs. 39-42.

Many were converted after Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2:14-41. First there was a great demonstration, the noise like that of a rushing mighty wind, and the tongues of fire. But the conversion of others followed all that and Peter's sermon.

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." vs. 37-38. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." v. 41.

Acts 8:26-38 gives a very interesting record of the conversion of the eunuch. He was reading his Bible, but did not understand it very well. Philip joined him and explained it to

him, and taught him about Jesus. Philip quietly received the teaching and obeyed it.

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." vs. 36-37.

The case of Saul, while on his way to persecute the Christians, is well known. Acts 9: 1-9; 17-18. There was a great commotion and a wonderful light. This made Saul aware of his wrong doing. His conversion was very quiet.

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus." vs. 6-8.

He quietly obeyed the Lord.

In the case of Lydia and her household, Acts 16:14-15, they had heard the apostles, and had given heed to all their words, and their hearts had been opened. They believed, and then they obeyed, confessing Jesus in baptism.

Acts 16:25-33 gives the conversion of the jailer and his household. The jailer was convicted of sin by the wonderful opening of the prison. Then followed instruction and faith and confession of Christ in baptism.

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." vs. 30-33.

In all of these conversions we find: an awakening to a sense of sin; instruction; faith, as shown by obedience; and confession, by baptism, except in the case of the woman of Samaria, who bore her confession in her message to the city.

We are saved by faith. Learning of Jesus through his word, believing on him, proving our faith by obedience, confessing him before men, and continuing to do this as long as we live, we are saved.

This idea of salvation it is important to fix well in mind. There is a very erronious and pernicious idea on the part of some people to the effect that you can "get religion" and be saved and be done with it. The fact is one cannot become nor continue to be a Christian in any such way. One cannot believe on Jesus when he does not know him. One cannot know Jesus without a patient study of his life and teaching. This takes some time and effort. Moreover, there must certainly be a decided change in the inward life, which will show itself, more or less, according to what the previous life has been, in the daily life of the man. If the previous life has been noticeably wicked, the change to better living will be decided and noticeable. If the previous life has been moral, the change will not be so noticeable to others, but the man himself will realize that a great change has come over him.

And, finally, one must continue in this new life

as long as he lives. You can not "get religion" every now and then, and then live a worldly life between these spells that some have. No, no! Christianity must command and control the whole man all the time. So when one starts to be a Christian he starts for all time and for all eternity. No one need be afraid to make the undertaking, if he does so with intelligence and sincerety. God will help one through.

CHAPTER X

THE ONLY WAY

In the last chapter we concluded that one might be saved by the obedience of faith in Jesus Christ. The question now arises whether one can be saved by any other means. It would seem strange, perhaps, that such a question should arise at all; and yet, when we consider that faith in Jesus Christ implies a willing and cheerful surrender of one's self and all that he has to the service of Christ, it is no wonder that the selfishness of the unrenewed heart causes one to draw back from so costly a means of salvation. If there is any other way of salvation it is right that we should know it; if there is not another way of salvation, the soul's only hope is to know that.

Peter seems not to have known of any other way of salvation. At one time, when the Lord had been preaching concerning the necessity that men should receive him into vital spiritual relations, many of his hearers were greatly dis-

pleased. Some of those who had been following him and listening to his teaching, seemingly almost ready to accept him fully, went back and would not follow him longer. The Lord was greatly grieved at this desertion, and when he and the twelve were alone together, he asked them:

"Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." John 6:67-69.

This answer of Peter's, in which he spoke for the twelve, clearly conveys the impression that Peter did not know of any other means of salvation; and his expression, "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ," indicated that he supposed that the Christ was the only means of salvation. Jesus could not have failed to know that Peter understood the matter in this way, and yet he did not make any objection to Peter's view of the case. His silence, indeed, gave consent to it.

Jesus expresses himself directly with reference to this matter.

"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." John 10: 7-9.

While in this passage the Lord does not distinctly declare that there is no other way of salvation, yet he seems clearly to imply it.

But Jesus clearly declares that he is the only way of salvation.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14: 6.

The whole teaching of the Bible on this subject goes to show that to come unto the Father is to be saved, and that separation between the soul and the Father is the condition of the lost. When the Lord says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," he means that no man can be saved except by him.

In the first letter to Timothy, Paul exhorts that prayers be made for all men, that they may live lives acceptably to the Savior, because this

Savior is the only mediator between God and man. Consequently he who would be saved by this mediation must live acceptably to him. But as he is the only mediator, there is no way of salvation except through him.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." I Tim. 2:5-6.

Enough has already been said to show that the teaching of the New Testament is that there is no possibility of salvation except through faith in Jesus Christ. One more text, however, the testimony of Luke, that states the fact as clearly and directly as it can be stated, is here given.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

It appears, then, conclusively, both from the teaching of Jesus himself, and from the teaching of Paul and of Luke, that there is no possible salvation for man except by faith in Jesus

Christ. There is no hope that one will be able, by his own power, so fully to overcome his natural tendency to sin that he can be saved.

Indeed, to be saved means to come into right relations with God, and not merely to be in right relations with men. If we were to live always on the earth, and only among our fellow men, then to a certain extent we might be saved by our own efforts to live in such a manner as to command the respect and honor of our fellow men and to avoid the sufferings caused by evil habits. But as the life of man upon the earth is exceedingly brief, so brief indeed that it is important only because of its influence upon the real life of the future, salvation must concern itself with the future life more than with the present. In this future life salvation consists in right relations with God, rather than with men. All so-called goodness, therefore, that does not take into consideration the will of God, is a kind of goodness that has nothing whatever to do with those right relations with God which constitute salvation. And on the other hand, those right relations with God which constitute salvation make necessary and certain the best possible relations with men.

And, moreover, right relations with men that are not the outcome of right relations with God, save the soul only from such torments as arise from wrong relations with men, but leaves the soul in all its highest and noblest aspirations still in the torment resulting from wrong relations with God. In every exalted sense the merely moral man is damned, and only he is saved who trusts in Jesus Christ, and so comes into right relations with God; and thus, necessarily, becomes a truly moral man.

PART II

THE ORDINANCES

CHAPTER XI

BAPTISM

A word of explanation regarding this Part II is due the reader. It is a matter of great rejoicing among all true Christians, who care more for the true Christianity than they do for some particular form of its expression, that the days of petty controversy are largely passed. Nevertheless, it is important that we do not let slip, in our spirit of toleration, the positive teachings of our Lord. That the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper are among these is quite universally held by the great body of Christians the world over. But there still remains quite a diversity of opinion as to the details of their administration; and there also remains more of the controversial spirit regarding these details than in almost any other case of difference between the churches. It is the author's firm belief that the spirit of controversy is sure to blind the eyes to the truth, and therefore he is anxious to avoid arousing it. The texts of Scripture regarding the ordinances

are therefore printed without comment. Let them speak for themselves.

The word for baptism, translated "wash," used; but not referring to the ordinance of baptism.

"And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables." Mark 7:4. "For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do." 8. "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner." Luke 11:38. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." Heb. 6: 1-2. "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." 9:10.

The Word Applied to John.

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 3:1-2. "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." 11:11-12. "And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him." 14:2. "And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger." 8. "And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." 16:14. "Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." 17:13. "And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore

mighty works do shew forth themselves in him." Mark 6:14. "And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist." 24-25. "And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets." 8:28. "When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" Luke 7:20. "For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist." 28. "For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil." 33. "They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again." 9:19.

Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

"He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

Matt. 3:11. "I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Mark 1:8. "John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Luke 3:16. "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." John 1:33. "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts 1:5. "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." 11:15-16.

Baptism of Fire.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear:

he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Matt. 3:11. "But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." 20:22-23. "But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized." Mark 10:38-39. "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Luke 12:50.

Baptism of Water.

"The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with

themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?" Matt. 21:25. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me." Mark 11:30. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" Luke 20:4. "And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom you know not; he it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing." John 1:25-28. "And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode." 10:40. "Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Acts 1:22. "That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached." 10:37. "When John had first preached before his coming the

baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel." 13:24. "This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John." 18:25.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28: 19-20. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 8:12.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:16. "Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done." Acts 8:13. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the

eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." vs. 35-39.

"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." Luke 7: 29-30.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2: 41-42.

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus,

whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:36-38.

"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us." Acts 16:14-15.

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And

when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." 30-34. "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." 18:8. "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." "I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.)" I Cor. 1:13-17; 16:15.

"And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Matt. 3:6. "And there went out unto him all the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of

him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Mark 1:5.

"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Matt. 3:7-8. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance." 11. "And there went out unto him all the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Mark 1:5. "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Luke 3:7-8. "Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do

violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." 12-14.

"John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Mark 1:4. "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Luke 3:3. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts 2:38.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38. "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Acts 8:14-17. "He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they

said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." 19:2-6.

"Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." Acts 9:17-18.

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.

Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?'' 10:44-47.

''And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead: that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.'' Col. 1:18. ''For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.'' I Cor. 12:13. ''For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.'' Gal. 3:27.

''And John was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.'' John 3:23.

''Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.'' Rom. 6:3-5.

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." I Cor. 10:1-2. "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" 15:29. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Col. 2:12.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Eph. 4:5.

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3:

13-17. "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mark 1: 9-11. "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved son; in thee I am well pleased." Luke 3: 21-22. "And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore I am come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." John 1: 31-32.

"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa; and there he tarried with them, and baptized." John 3: 22. "And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same

baptizeth, and all men come to him." 26. "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)" 4:1-2.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:16. "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." I Pet. 3:20-21.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28:19-20. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ

for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38. "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days." 10:48. "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." 22:16.

CHAPTER XII

THE LORD'S SUPPER

"Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every-one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which

betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." Matthew 26: 17-30; Mark 14: 12-26; Luke 22: 7-39.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2: 41-42.

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper cham-

ber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed." Acts 20: 7-11.

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an

idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." I Cor. 5:7-11.

"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whoso-

ever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." I Cor. 11: 19-29.

PART III

DUTIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS

CHAPTER XIII

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

After one has become a Christian the question of church membership usually arises. If it does not, it is a serious misfortune, because the churches are of divine origin and authority, and are essential both to the best development of the individual Christian and to the progress of the Kingdom of God in the world.

It is our purpose in this chapter to speak briefly of the subject of church membership, referring our readers to the author's book entitled *Christian Growth,* the chapter on The Churches, where the subject is treated more fully. There is no passage of Scripture that declares unequivocally that the Christian must become a member of the church; but all of the teaching of the New Testament with reference to the church clearly shows that membership in the church was expected of every Christian, as a matter of course.

In the first place it should be noticed that the churches form a part of the Gospel plan.

Jesus said that he would build a church.

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18.

If Jesus established the church, of course he established it for his followers. And therefore his followers ought not to disappoint him by refusing to become members of the church that he established.

The Lord made provision for the government of the church and for its constitution. He gave the apostles authority in these matters, so that the church is really an institution having divine authority. The apostles had lived with the Lord and had listened to his teaching. They would naturally remember what he taught; but that there might not be any possible doubt as to whether they remembered accurately or not, the Lord promised to send the Holy Spirit to refresh their memories with reference to what he had taught them.

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:26.

The teaching of Christ, therefore, as recorded by the four evengelists, and all the teachings of the apostles form a constitution, or authoritative teaching, for the church. Every Christian who has his Bible should study it for himself; but he should remember that the Bible is really the constitution of the church, and that when he makes use of it he is making use of that which the church has received as a trust and has preserved through the centuries for its use. Ordinary gratitude would lead the Christian to identify himself with the church that has so greatly served him and the world.

Farthermore, every one who becomes a Christian enters into the spirit of the Master whom he has resolved to serve.

The most prominent characteristic of Jesus, the Savior, is pity for those who are doomed to everlasting separation from God because of sin; and a desire to reach them with the Gospel

of God's willingness to pardon, if they repent of sin and forsake it. We find Jesus, prompted by this spirit, coming into the world at the cost to himself of great suffering and ultimate death, for the sake of saving the world. He who has really become a follower of Jesus partakes, to some extent at least, and to a continually increasing extent, of this same spirit of self-sacrifice for the sake of saving the lost world.

If every Christian were to work according to his own plans and in his own neighborhood only, the Gospel could never be carried to the nations where no Christians live. In order that the Gospel may be sent to heathen nations it is necessary that there should be a combination of Christian effort and the cooperation of all Christians. In the church the Lord provided for just such an organization, and the real purpose of the church is the spreading of the Gospel throughout all the nations. The Lord indeed organized the church for the very purpose of carrying out, through his disciples, the great mission which he gave them.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of

the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28:19-20.

And again, the relation between Christ and the Christian involves his membership in the church.

The Christian is in Christ.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5.

This relation is, of course, spiritual. And it is also real. Indeed spiritual relations are the most real of any. This relation between Christ and his followers is assured only by the continued consent of both parties. Any other kind of contract is not nearly so real as such an one, however binding it may be.

The symbol of this entrance into Christ is baptism. All who are baptized are baptized into Christ.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Romans 6:3. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. 3:27.

Now Christ is the head of the church which is his body.

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:22-23.

Therefore as the Christian is in Christ, and as Christ is the head of the church which is his body, the Christian is identified with the church. I do not wish to be dogmatic about this, nor to push it beyond the spirit involved in it. It seems to me evident that a true Christian will see that Christ desired that there should be a practical organization for advancing the Kingdom on earth, and that this body should be, not spiritual only, but organized as well.

Let the willing Christian know, in addition to all this, that Christ loves the church, and his response will be quick and true in the matter of church membership.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5: 25-27.

Besides these considerations the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper belong to the church, so that one cannot properly use these ordinances who is not willing to be identified with the church.

The objection is often made that the churches do not agree with each other in the interpretation of the Word of God, and that members of the churches are often destitute of many of the Christian graces, that churches are sometimes quarrelsome among themselves, and that members of a particular church are often quarrelsome among themselves, so that one feels safer outside of the church than as a member of it. That there is often too much truth in these complaints must be admitted, and if one by becoming a member of the church simply makes one

more to quarrel and complain and dishonor the Master, by all means let him stay out. But if one has received the spirit of his Master and can stand for the things that are noble and of good repute, considering himself lest he also be tempted, and is willing to glorify God at the sacrifice of his own selfishness and wilfulness, then let him find his place in the body of Christ, and seek with all his consecrated powers to keep that body free from sin, that it may be a means which God can use for the strengthening of Christian character and the salvation of the lost.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WORD OF GOD

Our Lord himself is called the Word of God. This is made very clear from a study of the prologue to John's Gospel. In the very first verse we read:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1.

Lest there should be any doubt concerning the real personality of the Word mentioned in this verse, John proceeds, in the fourteenth verse, to state definitely that this Word was Christ.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14.

The impression seems to have gone abroad in some quarters that one may become a Christian without reference particularly and directly to

the Word of God. This impression ought to be corrected.

In the first place, we should consider the fact that the Word of God is abiding.

The words of many men do not stand forever. As human knowledge advances, some things that have been held to be true are found to be more or less untrue, and therefore must be abandoned. But the Word of God, because God knows all things, and does not change, is absolutely true to the facts as they exist, and therefore it will never change.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Matt. 24:35.

This sureness is very delightful and gratifying to all those who have searched among the thoughts of men for absolute and abiding truth, and have been as often disappointed as they have searched, finding that only occasionally does human thought advance so certainly into the possession of the absolute truth of God that it can be depended upon as final and authoritative. But in the Word of God the all-wise God himself has spoken, through his Son, the ultimate facts concerning the things that are most

necessary for man to know in order that he may be saved.

Secondly, the Word of God is authoritative. Indeed, Jesus himself claims that his teaching is authoritative because he received it from God, and because he came from God.

"The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." John 14:24: "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." John 17:8.

In the face of the teaching of Jesus that he depended for his doctrine upon what he had received from God, as the Son of God, who came forth from a personal association with God, certainly it seems a presumption for any one to suppose that he may depend upon his own thought of God for his salvation. Human philosophy is wholly unable to make known the way of salvation. Such a way can be made known only by a direct and authoritative revelation from God. This we have in the Word of God.

In the third place, notice what the Word of God does.

We will study II Timothy 3:16 for a moment. From this text we learn that The Word of God teaches, reproves, corrects, and instructs men in righteousness.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

The word of God is profitable for doctrine, that is for teaching. Some men have supposed that the word doctrine here means the same thing that it is made to mean by men when referring to the dogmas of theologians. That is not the meaning. The word means simply "teaching." So the Word of God is profitable for teaching. Indeed it is the only teaching that we have regarding Christ and his Gospel. It is really our only text-book. If this fact has never deeply impressed one it ought to do so now. It is very easy to find fault, even with the Bible and with God; but where can one do better?

There are the ancient books of various heathen religions, but they are not satisfactory to those who know the Bible. There are the gods

of wood and stone to which many of the world's throngs bow down, but they are not wholly satisfactory, even to some of their own devotees. Paul on Mars' hill, a hill dedicated to the god Mars, the god of war, found that the worshipers of that god were looking out for another, seeking to include in their worship all possible gods.

"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be

not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Acts 17: 22-29.

We cannot do better than to be true to our God and to his Word.

But we are satisfied, as a rule, with God and Jesus. We know of them almost exclusively from the Bible. There seems to be a universal, natural impression among men that there is a great first cause and living force over or in the universe, but if we did not have the Bible we should not know any more about this great Being than do the heathen. And, regarding our knowledge of Christ Jesus, there occurs only the most meager reference to him in any of the ancient records of the times in which he lived. We are dependent almost wholly, practically wholly, upon the Word of God for our knowledge of him. 'The Word of God is profitable for teaching.'

Take for an example the first part of Christ's sermon on the mount.

"And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. 5: 2-9.

The Word of God is also profitable for reproof. The necessity for reproof is exceedingly great among men, because man is prone to do evil.

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." Prov. 13: 24.

Every sensible person sees at once the wisdom of this proverb.

The trouble, so seriously felt, with reproof

as it is administered by man to man is that such reproof partakes of the imperfection and error of mankind. Paul recognized this difficulty. When he gave instruction to certain men to correct others who were in error, he said:

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. 6:1.

But the Word of God is free from this difficulty. It is, as we have seen, the word of God, and therefore partakes of the wisdom and perfection of God. It never reproves unjustly. It reproves wrong in the abstract. It leaves the conscience of each one to make the reproof concrete by special application to himself. It furnishes the coat; if it fits, conscience makes one put it on. The Word of God never reproves unkindly, nor in unholy anger, as men so often do; but its reproof is always in love, though sometimes accompanied by the holy wrath of God. It is good to be reproved thus. It makes continued improvement possible, without limit, through ascending degrees of righteousness unto infinity.

Take for an example of reproof our Lord's rebuke to Peter when he protested against the suffering and death which Jesus told them were to be his lot.

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." Mark 8: 31-33. Also, "And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words. And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image

and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him." Mark 12: 13-17. Also Luke 19: 41-44, "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

According to this text from Timothy the Word of God also corrects. Reproof implies blame on the part of the person reproved. Correction implies error on the part of the person corrected, but it does not necessarily imply blame. Reproof is humiliating. Few can bear it. But every reasonable person prefers to be corrected, provided he is sure that the person correcting him is trustworthy. The Word of

God must be to him an absolutely safe, indeed the only absolutely safe, corrective. If one should correct his life constantly by the Gospel, he would be perfect. It is not enough that one follow conscience, which is not an unfailing criterion. The Word of God is the standard to which all moral action must be brought for correction. The Jews had been falling deeper and deeper into error concerning many of the teachings of the Word of God.

Jesus takes occasion to correct some of those errors in the sermon on the Mount. Notice one case.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not

even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:43-48.

One more thing this text teaches us regarding the Word of God: it instructs in righteousness. This is what makes the Gospel the most practical moral code possible. A great mistake has been made in the past in making the Word of God theoretical rather than practical. The religion of the Bible is not a system so much as it is a rule of life. We have been inclined to build up a system on the basis of the Word of God, and to discuss it, rather than to put the rules there furnished us into practical application to life. This mistake has been very serious in its effect upon the world. It has misrepresented the Christian religion, and plunged the church into age-long controversy. The Word of God is particularly profitable for instruction in righteousness.

Two or three passages will illustrate.

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow

is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Matt. 7: 13-20. "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." Matt. 19:16-22. "And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:28-31.

All this that the Word of God does it does incisively.

"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner

of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12.

That is, the Word of God is so incisive, so keen to rebuke our follies and our sins and our sinful state, so certain to humiliate us and make us ashamed, that we turn away from it or seek to adjust it to our own state of mind rather than, loyally receiving it, to pray God to adjust us to the Word. It cuts. It is quick, that is, alive. The figure is that of a sharp twoedged sword in the hand of a lively and powerful man. The expression cutting is often applied to a remark, "a cutting remark." We usually think of such a remark as sarcastic. It need not be. The Word of God does not use sarcasm. Nevertheless it is often very cutting in the sense of being incisive, going to the very root of the matter and rebuking evil and evil-doers with scathing reprimand.

Notice two or three illustrations.

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the

rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?'' Acts 2:36-37. ''And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.'' Luke 6:41-42. ''Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever swear-

eth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." Matt. 23: 14-24.

The reason why the Word of God cuts so sharply is usually because it discerns so accurately the thoughts and intents of the heart. Christ announced from the beginning that his word would be discerning and discriminating. The ax was to be laid at the root of the tree. His own thought was clear and his mind went to the center of the consciousness of those about him in a way that often embarrassed them and made them feel that their secrets were known.

It is this power of discernment on the part of Christ that makes his Word so discerning.

Two illustrations of this power will suffice. The Gospel is full of such instances.

"Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great." Luke 9:46-48. "And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you." Luke 11:37-41.

But this very sharpness and incisiveness of the Word of God makes it an unfailing search-light by means of which one may come to know himself thoroughly, and so to prepare himself perfectly for the examination of the great day. No danger can possibly befall any one who is absolutely, fearlessly, faithfully, patiently, loyal to the Word of God.

Thus the Word of God becomes the Word of reconciliation. God is absolutely true. Man has fallen out of the knowledge and obedience of the truth. Therefore man is out of favor with God. God tells man what the truth is, and invites him to be loyal to it, and so to come again into his favor. This is reconciliation, and the Word of God becomes the Word of reconciliation.

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." II Cor. 5:18-19.

And from this text we learn that not only are

men reconciled to God by means of the Word of God, but they who are reconciled become ministers of reconciliation. This does not mean, of course, that they all become preachers or pastors; but it does mean that every Christian should seek to reconcile to God all men whom he can influence. If every one who has experienced this work of the Word of God in his behalf will make it known to others then the work of reconciling the world to God will go speedily forward.

The new birth, which is the beginning of the Christian life, is brought about by means of the word of God.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." I Peter 1: 23.

If the new birth is brought about by the Word of God, then every departure from it, even in the slightest degree, will to that extent imperil the new birth.

Because the Word of God is the only authoritative revelation from God that concerns the salvation of man's soul from death, it is called the Word of Life. The teachings of Jesus are

not merely an excellent moral code; but they are the means, the only means, by which life can be brought to the soul that is dead in sin.

"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." v. 68.

These things being so, it is with great satisfaction that we learn that the Word of God is to be the basis of judgment in the great day when men shall be examined according to it regarding their right to Heaven.

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." John 12:48-50.

Not according to man's thought, nor either by the accumulated wisdom of the ages, not by any

dream or fancied revelation or vision are we to be judged in that day, but according to the sure Word of God that has been delivered unto us.

It must be evident from what has already been said that it is vitally important that men should be loyal to the Word of God. We must consider this subject of loyalty a little farther.

And, first, as to what loyalty involves. All people understand well that to become a Christian is to become a follower of Jesus Christ and a believer in him and in his teachings; and John, from his prologue, evidently thinks that Jesus and his teaching are so closely identified that he may speak of Jesus as the Word. A moment's reflection will convince us that we could not know Jesus at all were it not for his Word; for without the history of his life, which we have in the New Testament, we could not know of him. It is evident therefore that if one becomes a Christian he must do so by a careful study of the Word of God. Loyalty must certainly involve knowledge.

Loyalty requires also that the feelings be right toward the Word of God. I have spoken elsewhere of the danger of putting too much dependence upon feeling in matters of religion.

That danger must be carefully guarded against; but, on the other hand, a religion that is of the head and will only is too cold to be genuine. Indeed, the will to do what the head declares ought to be done is moved to compliance by the sensation that warms the whole soul into activity.

It may be time for a great train to start with a heavy load of people bent upon pressing and important business. The train has been announced; everybody is aboard; an engine, capable of drawing a mile of loaded cars, water in the boiler, coal in the tender, engineer and fireman in their places, stands majestically at the head of the train. But the train does not move because the fires have gone out under the boiler. It is not the fire that moves the train; but it is the fire that awakens the power that does move it. It is just so in human activities; the feelings are like the fire, the will is like the steam, the feelings awaken the will as the fire boils out the steam. Carry the illustration a little farther. The passengers look at their watches, find it past starting time, and begin to get uneasy. They begin to show some feeling at being delayed. One after another,

men who are fearful of missing important connections begin to hunt for the conductor. They talk to him feelingly. The conductor's feelings begin to get warm; he begins to say things to the engineer. The engineer sees his job taking wings and fires up as he never fired before. Considerable heat has been developed all along the line from the passenger to the firepot of the engine and things begin to move.

Feeling may arouse to negative action. The action will be according to the state of the mind. If the engine is reversed when the fires awaken power, the train will move backward. So if the mind has decided against an object instead of for it, the feeling awakened will be of hate or shame. It is important to know an object well before feeling is aroused. Indeed, feeling is aroused by knowledge; and so it should be held in check until knowledge has become thorough concerning the object; otherwise hate or shame may be aroused where it is not deserved. The knowledge of Jesus should be so thorough that men's hearts will turn toward him in love rather than away from him in shame.

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sin-

ful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." Mark 8:38. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9:26.

Loyalty to the Word of God involves more than perfect candor and fidelity in seeking to understand it. It involves, too, real obedience to it, exact conformity to it, exactly as it is.

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James 1:22-25. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." I John 2:5.

This spirit of perfect obedience to the exact Word of God, this perfect loyalty to it, makes it possible for one fully to enter into Christ, so that he becomes the greatest delight of the soul. It may be said of such an one that the Word dwells in him; and if that be true, he lives in the spirit of Christ, and the spirit of Christ dwells in him. This is salvation.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Col. 3:16. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. . . . If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John 14:21, 23.

The salvation and eternal happiness of every one depends upon his individual loyalty to the Word of God. Let us be very careful how we let prejudice or love of self preclude this perfect loyalty and love.

It may as well be clearly understood from the first by any one who has any thought of becom-

ing, or of continuing to be, loyal to the Word of God that he is not undertaking an easy task. Possibly this way of stating the matter may seem a little strange to some. Does any one ever deliberately decide to be loyal or not to be loyal to the Word of God? Possibly now and then one makes this decision deliberately and with well-defined intent; but usually such a deliberate decision is never made, even by those who are loyal. Such people have fallen into loyalty as most people "fall in love." It would be better if people did not *fall* in love. If they decided deliberately regarding the worth or unworthiness of a possible object of love, then love could act intelligently and not be disappointed later. Divorces or unhappy marriage relations are at the farther end of that lover's lane into which people merely stray. It is very important that people know each other well and with thorough approval before they allow themselves to walk in lover's lane.

This illustrates the case exactly. Backsliding is the result of religious feeling aroused by other means than Christian knowledge. The person who has become thoroughly acquainted with the Word of God and then decides to

become loyal usually remains loyal to the very end. This is not easy. It requires careful and continued study of the Word itself in order that one may know what he proposes to believe and to love. The result of intelligent and unprejudiced study of the Bible will make a favorable choice enthusiastic. Some will misunderstand this declaration and deny it. I wish however to reaffirm it, but with the understanding that such a study as I have mentioned is not an easy task, that it involves an open mind and a clear understanding. Merely to swallow the ark with the whale in it and Jonah in the whale is not loyalty. What do these things signify? Are they historical incidents or allegorical teachings? To decide these matters to one's satisfaction and get to the intended truth is loyalty; but it is not easy. No one can be truly loyal to the Word of God who is too prejudiced either for or against it, or too lazy, or too busy to investigate fairly. My observation has been that those who investigate truly become loyal.

But while I have emphasized the need of careful and continued study I believe that the task of giving this study is not so difficult as is the

task of keeping the heart free from rebellion against the reproof that meets one constantly in his study; or, if not to keep free from rebellion, then to get one's own consent to his personal obedience. Very few people have the wisdom and grace to profit by reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. In the face of the last men grow angry and resist or draw back. So the Word of God becomes a temptation to disobedience.

"And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." I Pet. 2:8.

A very practical question arises here which I do not wish to pass unanswered. There are many people who have not the education to understand the Bible; and there are the children. What about these? Cannot they be loyal? Before answering let me suggest that the question is not, in modern civilized countries, so much a question of ability to make a thorough investigation as it is a question of one's purpose to do so. There are very few men, comparatively speaking, who are not devoted and

fairly intelligent readers of the daily newspapers. Our children are able to understand really difficult books in their school work. The real question is one of choice, not of ability. If we choose to give our time and strength to business or pleasure or study of other things, to the neglect of the study of the Bible, and to have our children follow our example, loyalty to the Word of God will not be a characteristic of our own or of our children's lives.

As to the main objection, overcome rebellion, indifference, and choice of other things, and one will find the Word of God, in its essential attack upon the sinfulness of the heart, and in the fundamental principles of salvation, to be so easy of comprehension, so direct and inequivocal, that a child can be made to understand and obey it.

"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Isa. 35:8.

In conclusion, notice that it is not possible

for one to be a Christian without the Word of God.

A Christian is a follower of Christ. To be a member of his church and to be called by his name is not enough. This does not make one a Christian. One must be a firm believer in Christ and in his teaching, and must have both his spirit and his teaching incorporated in his own spiritual life.

But this cannot be except by a thorough knowledge of Christ and of his teaching. Such a knowledge can be obtained only in the Word of God. Of course I do not mean by this that one may not learn all this from other writings than the Bible itself. Texts of Scripture may be printed in other books and read there; or the substance of the teaching of Christ may be accurately given in other words than those of Scripture. All this, in so far as it is an accurate representation of the Scripture statements, is itself the real Word of God. It is very much safer, however, to go to the Bible itself to verify every statement made in other books. An author or commentator may make a mistake. Their works are very helpful in bringing to one's attention unnoticed meanings; but the

Bible in the original languages is the standard to which every version and comment must be made to conform.

This loyalty to the real Word of God is necessary both in becoming and in continuing to be a Christian. In this Word we have also the teaching concerning conversion and regeneration, involving all the teaching concerning sin, the sinful state, repentance, faith, and prayer, which is essential to the becoming a Christian.

And in the same Word we have all the teaching regarding the means of perseverance in the Christian life, including the church and the Christian activities, and progress in holiness.

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained." I Tim. 4:6. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed in-

deed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." I Pet. 2:1-6.

CHAPTER XV

ATTENDANCE AT CHURCH SERVICES

Christians will always find it greatly to their advantage to attend regularly all the services of their respective churches. Let it be understood, however, that by "services" we mean only such meetings of the church as have for their end the service of God, either in the direction of worship or of work. We sometimes find meetings of churches the purpose of which is so indirectly the service of God, if indeed the service of God is in the mind at all, that their result is anything but helpful to the Christian. Very many times such meetings, held principally for social purposes or for the purpose of making money, are a serious temptation to the Christian, and an awful hindrance to his progress in the divine life. A Christian is not under any obligation to attend such meetings; and, indeed, in many cases he will honor God by keeping away from them.

We wish here to learn something concerning the Christian's duty in this matter by studying carefully some of the meetings of the church recorded in the New Testament.

The record of one of the first meetings of the church may be found in John.

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the

nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." John 20:19-29.

At this time the church organization was probably not very definite. It was simply an assembly of the apostles and some women in a room which they had secured for the purpose of mutual security and worship. The Jews, being very angry at all the followers of Jesus, were ready to kill them. The disciples were assembled in this room upon the first day of the week, having the doors barred for fear of the Jews.

The circumstances in which we live to-day are somewhat different from those in which the

disciples lived at the time of this meeting; but the dangers from the enemies of Christ to-day are subtler and not so manifest to the thoughtless. Nevertheless they are more fatal than were the dangers of the early disciples. Their physical dangers drove them together and led them to realize how great was the opposition of the world against Christ. They were therefore guarded against spiritual dangers. But in this day, when physical danger does not threaten the Christian, he mingles with those who are no less enemies of Christ than were the Jews who slew him; and before he is aware his spiritual life has suffered eclipse, if not extinction, from contact with the enemies of his Lord.

At this time the disciples had the unspeakable pleasure of meeting the Lord. He came in to them, quietly and unseen, revealing himself to them in such a manner as to convince them that he was their very Lord. It is true that any Christian may meet his Lord anywhere, at any time, if he has the faith and courage to yield to the Spirit of God every personal ambition and unholy thought; but it is also true that where the people of God have assembled together with united hearts and earnest prayers the Savior

has always been present and his blessing has been realized. The presence of their Master greatly strengthened and encouraged the hunted and sorrowing disciples. The Lord talked with them. He convinced them. He soothed them until their fears were gone and their courage arose to meet any emergency of their Christian service. And so in the meetings of God's people now the Lord himself does for his disciples all that he did for them of old.

In this meeting of the disciples the Lord also commissioned them, sending them forth upon the same errand as that upon which his Father had sent him forth. From the way in which these disciples went out to fulfil this commission, even going so far as to give their lives, as the Master had given his, in service and in suffering unto death, we infer that they had been deeply impressed by this meeting with their Lord, and that they had felt gravely the responsibility and the glory of their commission to carry forward the work that he had begun. So it is with the disciples of God to-day who meet often in the house of God for the purpose of Christian service. The true Christian is ready and willing to serve the Master to the extent of

his ability and to the very end, even though it cost him his living and his life. But this commission, with the accompanying inspiration to fulfil it, comes upon the children of God and is perpetuated in their hearts by the meetings of the church more than in any other way.

While these disciples were assembled in this meeting their Lord

"Breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John 20:22.

The Holy Spirit, the final equipment for the service which the Master commissions men to perform is usually received where the people of God are met together for his service.

At this meeting the Lord also gave to his disciples authority with reference to the sins of men. Whether this was a special authority granted to these early disciples only or not, it remains true that where the people of God are assembled together in his Spirit for the purpose of service they receive from God a marvelous power to convert men. The Christian who desires to have part in the conversion of the world to Christ must take his place faithfully among the people of God in his church.

One of the members of this church was not present at this meeting. He was away by himself, looking out for himself, and doubting the resurrection, half believing that his Master was not the Son of God; at least fearing that some great mistake had been made, and about ready to give up his discipleship. He is a type of the professing Christian of to-day who does not attend church. His Christian life is such, only in name. He knows nothing of the constant presence and inspiration of his Master. He shirks the work that the Master desires him to do. He is destitute of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. He has no power to win a soul to Christ. The absent church member, indifferent, doubting, dying, is an object for great pity; and unless by some means he acquaints himself with God, in spite of his profession, he will be a castaway.

One week after this first meeting there was another of which mention is made in the Gospels. There had probably been meetings every night. But at this meeting of which a record is given, the absent church member was present. Thomas saw the Master for himself. He was greatly humbled and rebuked for his unbelief.

Fortunately, however, Thomas bore his humiliating rebuke and profited by it. Occasionally the absent church member drops into a meeting. Whenever he does, he is humbled, rebuked, and angered. He attends the meetings of the church just often enough to keep him in this state of resistance. This is a very unfortunate condition for the member to be in, as well as a great trial to his brethren. It would be better to take the rebuke as Thomas did.

"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." John 20: 26-29.

Another meeting of the early church is recorded in Acts 1: 6-11.

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1: 6-11.

This is the last meeting recorded of the disciples with their Lord while his resurrection body was still present with them here on earth. Indeed, it is the meeting in the midst of which he ascended up to Heaven, and at the close of which the disciples received the promise of his

second coming. The Christian who does not attend the meetings of the church soon loses his desire for the second coming of the Lord, and forgets that any definite promise has been given concerning it. This great and inspiring promise very seldom impresses the Christian except in the meetings of his brethren.

Still another meeting is recorded in Acts 1:12-14.

"Then returned they into Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphæus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

This was a business meeting of the church where they considered the interest of the Kingdom of God and elected an apostle in the place of Judas. It was a time of grave responsibil-

ity; and so far as the record shows the responsibility was borne with the utmost fidelity and under the direction of the Spirit of God. The business meetings of the churches in these days are not always so exemplary; and yet every member of the church should feel that he has a certain responsibility in the affairs of the church. He should make himself acquainted with them and do his utmost to make these meetings spiritual and profitable, for the good of the church and the spread of the Master's kingdom.

In the second chapter of Acts beginning with the first verse we have the record of that marvelous day of Pentecost.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Acts 2:1.

Sometime toward the beginning of this meeting the Holy Spirit came upon the church in a special and very marked manner. The disciples were greatly aroused and were moved even beyond their own power and knowledge. Then they listened to Peter's inspiring sermon, and witnessed the conversion of three thousand

people. Such a marvelous demonstration could hardly have taken place except in a great meeting of the church.

It may be that there was something special in this meeting, something required by the particular circumstances of the church in its early beginnings, something not to be repeated in all its features in the churches of to-day; but, however that may be, when the churches of God to-day assemble with the intention of waiting patiently until the Holy Spirit comes upon them, if they are patient enough and sincere enough, they always receive the Holy Spirit with the accompanying power and resulting conversions. But where not more than half of the professing Christians of a community attend such a meeting, and the other portion thinks and even speaks slightingly of it, there is of course a division of interest, resulting in such a dissention as to grieve the Spirit, dispel power, and make the church of Christ a laughing-stock in the eyes of the world.

The disciples continued in these meetings, in prayer and in breaking of bread; and sinners were saved.

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2:42. "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." vs. 46-47.

Finally, we have an exhortation to Christian people to be prompt in their attendance at the meetings of the church. This exhortation is needed in this day perhaps more than in the days when it was spoken. Let it appeal to each one of us, and may God give us hearts to heed it.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Heb. 10:23-25.

CHAPTER XVI

SUBJECTION.

There are very few people, if any, who do not prefer to have their own way. And people are not usually content with having their own way with reference to themselves simply, but they desire to exercise some controlling influence over others. This always brings about an effort to secure supremacy. Such efforts necessarily result in contest, and usually in strife, leading not unfrequently to serious and long continued quarrels. As a matter of fact, such results often occur even in the Church of Jesus Christ.

This natural tendency of the human heart makes government necessary. So people band themselves together and of their own free will choose some one from among themselves to be their leader. This is a government. After the organization is complete and the leaders are elected, refusal on the part of any one to be subject to the authority of the body so organ-

ized, and of the officers so appointed, is rebellion; and the attempt to destroy the government is anarchy.

It is ordinarily easier to rule than to be ruled, to exercise authority than to be in subjection. We do not need, therefore, to speak of the necessity of ruling well, although that is exceedingly important; but it is desirable here to consider some of the texts of Scripture that bear upon the subjection of the Christian to authority.

In the first place it is to be noticed that individual Christians ought always to be subject to the authority of the church as a body. That our Lord intended this to be so is evident from his teaching in Matthew 18:17, where he says:

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

The Lord has here been speaking of difficulties that may arise between brethren in the church. He teaches that these difficulties should be settled between the brethren who disagree, alone, if possible; but if this cannot be done,

then two or three others may be taken into consultation; and if the offending brother refuses to be reconciled, then appeal may be made to the church as the final authority, and the offending brother must then be excluded. There are other passages of Scripture that go to show the authority of the church over its individual members, and which clearly imply that every individual member of the church is supposed to recognize and to respect the authority of the church over him in all matters in which the church properly has jurisdiction.

The church elects or has appointed over it, as the chief leader and the chief in authority, an officer who is variously called an elder, a bishop, a minister, a pastor, etc. These various terms probably applied in New Testament times to the same officer.

The elder, in those apostolical days, as his name would imply, was one of the older men. The younger people are exhorted, in I Peter 5:5, to be in subjection unto the elder.

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder."

The elder man in those days was chosen to his

position because his age was supposed to make him a suitable leader. In later times the eldership has belonged to men who have been qualified to be leaders of the people, even though they may have been younger in years. This exhortation of Peter's should be sufficient to lead every member of the church to be submissive to the ruling of the elder of the church in all that pertains to church government.

In I Tim. 3:2-5, we have specified some of the qualifications of the bishop, and in the fifth verse it is clearly implied that he is to take care of the church of God.

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy or filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"

In Acts 20:28 is Paul's exhortation to several brethren who had been laboring with him in the Gospel as elders or bishops to be worthy of the

position of overseers of the church to which God had called them.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

As the New Testament is the authoritative manual of every true church, no church has any right to curtail the authority of its pastor, who should be recognized the elder and overseer, and to whose leadership every member of the church should submit cheerfully and loyally for the Lord's sake. If it should ever occur that the pastor of a church is unworthy of his sacred office, it is not the privilege of any member of the church to speak against him or refuse to be subject to his leadership; but if this unworthiness is certainly known to him, it may be his duty to bring his proofs quietly and without malice to the deacons of the church for their consideration and action. It seldom occurs, however, that a pastor would fail of successful and Godly leadership, if the members of the

church were loyal to him because his office is of divine appointment.

This spirit of subjection, however, is not to extend to the church and to its officers simply; but it is to extend to all the individual members of the church as well. In 1 Peter 5:5-6, we read:

"Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

This same text of Scripture teaches us that this subjection to one another is to be brought about by each one of the members humbling himself under the mighty hand of God. The spirit of humility will make it possible for each one to consider his brother's right and interest as well as his own, and to seek to be a submissive, not an overbearing member of the church.

In Romans 12:10, we have a still farther suggestion with reference to the spirit in which this subjection is to be assured.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another."

If all the members of the church have this kindly affection one to another, and this brotherly love, and this courtesy of submitting to each other, there will be no trouble in the church, no church quarrel, and no rumor of a church quarrel.

In the sixteenth verse of this same chapter, Paul gives us yet another rule for maintaining this spirit of subjection.

"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits." Roman 12:16.

It is probably true that no two persons ever think alike. But when it comes to the teaching of God's word, there is no necessity for differences of opinion. If every one will take the Word of God just as it reads, and will be willing to obey it wholly, there will be very little difference of opinion with reference to what it teaches. Differences of opinion arise when

men listen to their own prejudices and seek to make God's word conform to them.

In matters concerning which the Word of God does not speak directly, the spirit of humility, which prevents one from being wise in his own conceits, enables brethren and sisters, in the same church, to be practically of one mind. This makes it possible for the church always to glorify God.

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 15:5-6.

This duty of loyal subjection to the church, to its officials, and to each other, is a matter of the gravest importance. The church has many members who dishonor the Lord and put him to an open shame because they lack this spirit of subjection. Every young Christian, before he is admitted to the fellowship of a church, should clearly understand his duty in this matter.

CHAPTER XVII

PEACE

Christ was called the Prince of Peace.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9: 6.

He himself said:

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Matt. 10: 34.

This, however, has reference to the eternal war between the children of God and the children of Satan. It is impossible, and if it were possible it would be sinful, to have peace between right and wrong. The peace to which we refer in this chapter is that which may exist among those who are the children of God. Our Lord would have us understand that he is the Prince

of Peace in the sense that he will lead to peace through war against the forces of evil.

But in the midst of war, when the Christian is struggling against the forces of evil without, and is watchful against the forces of evil within, there may yet be peace of heart.

The Savior promised this to his disciples when his bodily presence was about to be taken from them.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." John 14:27.

The peace of which the Savior here speaks has nothing to do with political conditions, and is not in any way dependent upon them. It is that peace within the soul which comes from the certainty that one's sins are forgiven and that he has accepted God. However troublesome the world may be, even though the world may be at war, even though the Christian may be suffering great persecution, yet the Lord has revealed to him so much of the future glory, and has made him understand so clearly the blessings of the favor of God, that his heart may be at peace in the midst of war.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33.

Indeed this condition of peace is a sure result of the presence of the Spirit of God in the heart. The man is always at peace with himself in whose heart the Spirit of God dwells.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace." Gal. 5:22.

Because this is so, Paul exhorts the Colossian Christians,

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Col. 3:15.

This peace of heart would naturally lead to peace among brethren, which indeed is a characteristic of the Kingdom of God.

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Romans 14:17.

In first Corinthians seventh chapter, fifteenth verse, Paul teaches that if a husband and wife, one of whom is a Christian and the other is not,

cannot live together in peace because of this difference, they are at liberty to live apart. In other places Paul teaches that this separation is not divorce and that neither party has the right to marry again; but the thought that he is impressing here is the necessity that all members of the Kingdom of Heaven should live in peace. 1 Cor. 7:15.

"But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace."

Christians are earnestly exhorted to live at peace among themselves. And any Christian who has ever been so unfortunate as to have his lot cast among brethern who are not living in peace, would certainly be willing most earnestly to add his exhortation to those that follow, entreating his brethren everywhere to live in peace, and so to avoid the scandal that always comes upon the church of Christ when it is overpowered by dissention.

"Have peace one with another." Mark 9:50. "Live in peace." II Cor. 13:11. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for

peace." Romans 14:19. "Be at peace among yourselves." 1 Thessalonians 5:13. "Follow peace with all men." Hebrews 12:14.

Paul teaches farther that the meetings of the church should always be so conducted as to result in peace, in the sense of good order. The confusion that is sometimes seen in meetings of the church where two or three may be praying at once, or where some one begins to sing while another is speaking or praying, is a condition not of peace but of confusion. In 1 Cor. 14:23, 33, Paul is correcting this very error, and he closes his instruction in the thirty-third verse with these words:

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." v. 33.

So certain is it that the spirit of the Master in the hearts of his children will result in peace, that Jesus is spoken of as "our peace."

In his letter to the Ephesians Paul speaks of the relation of the Jew and the Gentile. The Jews were first called and had the benefit of being God's chosen people; but the Jews rejected Christ and so brought upon themselves condemnation. They therefore must repent,

the same as the Gentiles, and turn to Jesus for forgiveness and salvation, so that Jesus becomes the Savior of Jew and Gentile alike whenever he is received by faith. Thus the distinction between Jew and Gentile vanishes. The middle wall of partition is broken down and peace is made between them through the faith of Jesus Christ.

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity

thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." Eph. 2:11-17.

So it will be with the denominations into which the Kingdom of God has been divided. In just so far as men and women who profess to love the Lord Jesus Christ realize the spirit of Christ in their hearts, and laying aside selfishness and prejudice take his Word in his spirit and live by it will all middle walls of partition be broken down, and Christ become our peace.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHRISTIAN GROWTH

It is exceedingly important that every young Christian should understand that in conversion he has only begun the Christian life. Too much importance cannot be attached to this beginning; but Christian growth must follow or the Christian will be utterly useless, even becoming a detriment to the cause of Christ in the world. Those who desire a fuller treatment of this subject than can be given here are referred to the author's *Christian Growth,* to the chapter bearing that title; and, indeed, to the whole book.

The growth of the Christian is like the growth of a human body.

In the beginning of a Christian life one is only a babe in Christ. In the case of the conversion of children, they are not only babes in Christ, but they are babes also in understanding. Children may undoubtedly be converted; because, to the extent of their knowledge and

experience, they may, by the grace of God, give themselves wholly to the Saviour. These children however are certain to grow in knowledge and in experience. As knowledge and experience increase, the increase also must be consecrated to God; otherwise the person outgrows his Christianity, the Christian life remaining only what it was when the little child surrendered to God; but the individual has gone on growing. The result is that the man's Christian knowledge and experience become badly out of proportion to his natural knowledge and experience; thus the world outside, and frequently the individual himself, does not recognize the Christian in him. In a word, unless the Christian keeps pace with the growing man, the Christian may be almost entirely, if not quite, outgrown.

The same thing is true, though in a limited degree, with reference to those who are converted in later life. With these there is not so much possibility of outgrowing the Christian life, because the natural man is already mature; but so far as Christian experience is concerned they are only babes in Christ; and they are often only babes in Christ with reference to

knowledge of his will and of the duties of a Christian.

Thus it appears that in any case the newly converted Christian should make every attempt to grow normally out of Christian infancy.

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" 1 Cor. 3:1-3. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2:5.

The Christian should feel, fathermore, that it is not enough for him to make progress for a short time in Christian life, feeling that he may soon become settled and afterward proceed on the even tenor of his way. Christian experience should be as continuous as is the experience of the individual in any other direction. Progress in the Christian life may be greater

and longer continued than in any other direction. The Christian should have before him constantly the perfect man, Christ Jesus. As this perfect man is an ideal greatly exalted above any human ideal, no man will soon attain the fulness of his divine stature.

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 4:13.

Every Christian should seek to know by what means he may grow.

Growth in the Christian life is dependent, first of all, upon God. Just as it is impossible for any one, by taking thought, to increase his physical size, so it is impossible for the Christian, by merely wishing to become a better Christian, to make any advance in that direction. There cannot be any progress in Christian life except as God works in the heart of the Christian.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every

good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Heb. 13: 20-21.

The Christian must grow by a careful study of the nature and will of God, as it is revealed to men in the Word of God. Men are not able to receive revelations directly from God. No Christian can safely pray for guidance, without reference to the teaching of God's word; and then he must be sure that the impression which he receives in prayer is God's will. God has revealed himself to men, first of all, through his Word. We may know God's character and will from the Bible. When we thus become acquainted with him it will be comparatively easy, in almost any event of life, to know what the Lord would have us do; but he who depends upon prayer, without the study of God's word, will be led by his own ideals and by his own will rather than by the will of God.

"But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." Luke 11: 28. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my

Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John 14:23.

The church, also, with its officers and means of grace, has been established for the purpose of assisting the growth of Christians. It is reasonably certain and has been practically proved that professing Christians who do not identify themselves with a church, make but very little progress in Christian life. God in his wisdom knew the value of Christian association and of the preaching of the Gospel, and so he established the church and appointed the ministers of his Word. Let every Christian as soon after his conversion as possible become a member of a Christian church, and attend faithfully upon the means of grace.

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed

to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. 4: 11-16.

CHAPTER XIX

EVANGELIZATION

At first the inquirer has been, as the term implies, one who is asking the way of salvation. In a certain sense the inquirer is a disciple or learner of Christ. After his conversion he continues to be a learner of Christ; and he will always continue to be a disciple, in this sense, to the time of his death. But very soon after his conversion the disciple of Christ should begin to show something of the spirit that he has already received from Christ. The spirit of the Master is essentially the spirit that seeks for the salvation of men, the spirit of one who was sent out after men. An apostle is one who is sent forth. The term means the same as missionary. The disciple of Christ, having learned the spirit of Christ, becomes an apostle of Christ. The very spirit that he has learned sends him forth to show others the way of salvation. For a fuller treatment of this subject the reader is referred to *Christian Growth*, the chapter on Missions and Christianity.

The Christian partakes somewhat, and more and more, of the nature of his Master.

Any one who reads the story of Jesus Christ as it is told by the four evangelists, sees in him, predominate, paramount, triumphant, the love of God toward men. This love is evidently not the natural affection that the animal has for its young, nor the affection that arises from congeniality of character and temperament; but it is the love of compassion which is not affected by the character of its object. The Christian is soon moved, by this divine love which he sees in his Master, to the exercise of the same love. He catches his Master's spirit. He becomes like his Master. This love is the chief characteristic of his Master. In proportion as the Christian partakes of his Master's character does this love for the lost world control his life.

We notice also in studying the character of Christ that this love is not a mere useless passion. Indeed, it is probably not a passion at all, but a principle. It is an active principle.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." John 3:16.

And Jesus so loved the world that he was born

into it, suffered with it, labored unceasingly for it, and died for it. Here is the Christian's example. He has made but very little progress in the divine life who does not partake of his Master's spirit of love and act upon it, as his Master did. He will find some means of sending the Gospel to those who do not have it. If he cannot go in person he will assist in sending some one. He will pray and labor and suffer to secure the means which will enable him to do this.

Indeed, we should thoroughly understand that the spirit of missions is essentially the spirit of Christianity; and that there is no true Christianity where the heart is not fired with the spirit of missions.

The Savior says distinctly that he was sent from God, and that in the same way he has sent forth the Christian.

"As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." John 17:18.

Farthermore, among the very last words that the Savior spoke while visible upon earth were those by which he sent his followers forth

to preach the Gospel to all the world, giving them the assurance of his presence in the fulfilment of this divine mission.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

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